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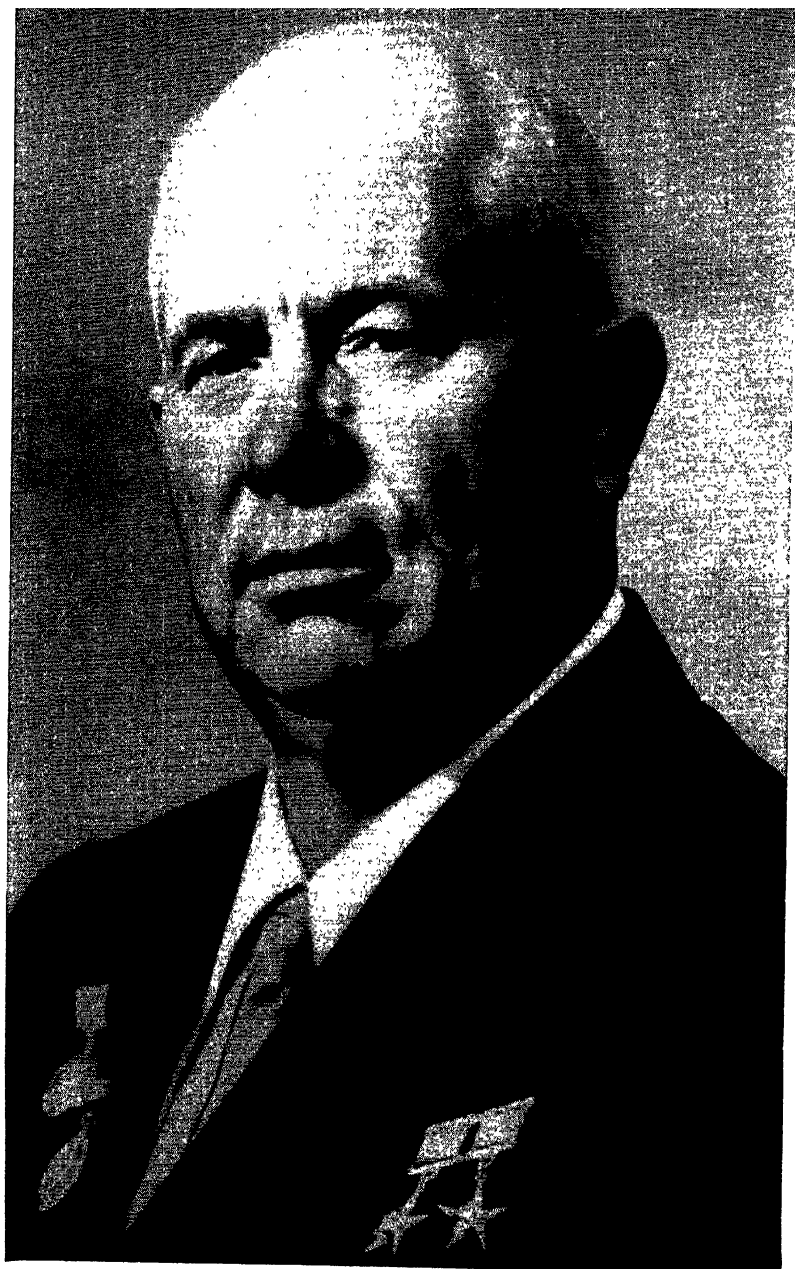
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THE UNDEFEATED
(Atlantic Nonfiction Prize Award, 1958)

**KHRUSHCHEV:
THE MAKING OF A DICTATOR**



Keystone Press Agency Limited

Khrushchev

George Paloczi-Horvath

KHRUSHCHEV:
THE MAKING OF A DICTATOR



With Illustrations

An Atlantic Monthly Press Book

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I

KHRUSHCHEV'S EARLY DAYS

A provisional report

NIKITA Sergeyevich Khrushchev's family background, childhood and early youth are all still in a state of flux. Contrary to the rest of the world, in the Soviet Union the future is certain, shaped by plans and governed by "inevitable" laws of development, while the past is most uncertain. The events of the past are constantly changed to fit the actuality of the present. Facts—to use Orwellian terminology—become "unfacts", persons "unpersons". On occasion unpersons and unfacts may be revived. The personal past of Soviet leaders is constantly promoted or demoted. The Soviet encyclopedias are also governed by the principle: "Truth is the political line of the day."

Encyclopedia articles are subjected to a continued process of rewriting in order to adapt them to the twists and turns in the struggle for power within the Soviet leadership. The second, Khrushchevian, edition of the Large Encyclopedia and the new version of Communist Party History demonstrated that this process is still continuing. Students of Soviet affairs know how difficult it is to foretell the Soviet past.

The present work which is based solely on Soviet documentation will not attempt to forecast Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev's final childhood and youth, if there ever should be one. The fact is that Soviet historical works, encyclopedias, biographical dictionaries and newspaper accounts usually cover the first thirty years of Khrushchev's life in two to five hundred words, giving very few and mostly conflicting details about Khrushchev's parents, childhood and youth. The archives of his native Kalinovka were lost and Khrushchev embarrasses would-be biographers by giving far too many conflicting versions of his early days.

The biographers of Soviet leaders often have tasks similar in a way to that of archeological researchers. Soviet public life is

absolutely depersonalised in the sense that the private life of public figures is taboo. According to Marxist principles subjective and personal aspects are of no consequence. None of Stalin's marriages, for instance, were ever reported in the Soviet Union. The Soviet press and radio never mention the family life, hobbies and idiosyncrasies of public figures. Until Khrushchev's visit to America, serious students of Soviet affairs refrained from writing anything definitive about his marriages and his children. On the eve of his departure, the foreign journalists in Moscow reported that he was married for the first time in 1920, 1921, 1922 and for the second time in 1938. On September 25, 1959, in Washington Mme Nina Petrovna Khrushcheva gave a press conference and in a revolutionary departure from Soviet practice, revealed that Khrushchev's first wife died "during the famine", and that she herself married him in 1924, when his two children by his first wife were six and eight years old. But for this press conference, the present work too would have had to refrain from saying anything definite about his marriages.

In the Soviet Union public figures exist only in their official political capacities. The provincial newspapers naturally also respect this rule. The local Party secretary exists on their pages as Party secretary and nothing else. One could say that the function is everything and the human being behind the function is nothing—as far as the public eye is concerned. The biographer has to read hundreds or thousands of newspaper articles, conference reports, speeches and interviews in order to establish a few "personal and private facts" which could be obtained in five minutes about the public figures of the outside world.

During the Stalin era this reticence about one's personal past and present private life was even stronger. People were imprisoned or even executed for having entertained a Communist functionary who fell out of favour five years after the insignificant party in question.

In this strangely depersonalised and dehumanised world men start to be visible when and as far as they act out their public functions. Hence the Khrushchev-story has to begin with his "Party-birth", with the time when he was chosen to become a member of Stalin's apparatus. From then on there is increasingly more circumstantial material, and later more and more

direct evidence, for tracing the development of this almost anthropologically different human species—the Communist *apparatchik*.

The circumstantial material is also depersonalised but still absolutely conclusive. There can be no doubt as to the functions, daily tasks and way of life of the various categories of Party functionaries at a given period. They all read and carry out the same instructions, they all conduct the same purges and stand in the same relationship to the secret police. Their speeches made on certain occasions must and do in fact contain the same sentences and phrases all over the Soviet Union, since they all receive the same précis from the centre through the agitation and propaganda network.

As an apparatchik makes his way to the higher rungs of the hierarchical ladder, there is increasingly more direct documentary evidence on his actions and general behaviour.

The present chapter however offers only a provisional report on the first twenty-eight years of Khrushchev's life.

Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev reached the uppermost region of Soviet power in 1934 by becoming first secretary of the Moscow City Party Committee. On the anniversary of the revolution he stood there on the top of the Lenin Mausoleum in Red Square, among the "great leaders" of party and government headed by Stalin.

His rise in the hierarchy had been uncommonly, unbelievably swift. He was then only forty years old but as to the all-important "Party-age" he was much younger. He had joined the Party only in 1918, when twenty-four, and had stepped on to the lowest rung of the hierarchical ladder of the Party apparatus as late as 1925, when thirty-one years old. *He reached the top in nine years.*

Khrushchev represented a new type among the Soviet leaders. He was entirely a product of Stalin's apparatus. Although only four years younger than Molotov and roughly of the same generation as many of the "old" Bolsheviks who took part in the conspiratory struggles before the revolution, Khrushchev was not one of the fathers but a child of the Bolshevik revolution.

The fathers of the revolution—Lenin, Trotsky, Bukharin and

the others—were European revolutionary intellectuals, shaped by the revolutionary heritage of the nineteenth century. They are fully comprehensible to people unfamiliar with the Soviet system. Stalin's personality was already partly shaped by the party monolith created by Lenin and perfected by himself. Yet large regions of Stalin's personality are immediately comprehensible to the outside world. Khrushchev, who was a semi-literate peasant worker and an *adult* when he joined the Party, had nothing of the intellectual-emotional background of the fathers of the revolution. He learnt to think from the Party and knew no other system than the Soviet one. His personality is just as enigmatic as the Soviet world. Khrushchev, the functionary, grew up together with the Party apparatus. His personality is only comprehensible through the story of his incredibly dangerous climb up the ladder of Communist hierarchy.

Under the "rise of Khrushchev", or even "miraculous rise of Khrushchev" people generally mean the fact that after Stalin's death in 1953, Khrushchev "the newcomer" became in less than four years unquestioned dictator of the Soviet Union. However, the fact is that a month after Stalin's death Khrushchev had exactly the same position in the Party apparatus as Stalin occupied at the time of Lenin's death! The really astonishing "rise of Khrushchev" was the first one. His political personality was largely shaped by those first nine years and by the subsequent years of the great purges.

Who was the man who arrived in 1934 at the top of the Lenin Mausoleum?

As with all Soviet Party and government notables the public rewriting of his life-history began with his promotion to the top. The Moscow evening daily, *Vechernyaya Moskva*, reported on February 9, 1935, that the new secretary was of peasant origin, was "an active participant in the civil war" who "conducted active Party work" in the Red Army. Three years later when he was promoted to candidate membership of the all-powerful Politbureau his past was also promoted and Khrushchev became "one of the political educators" of the Red Army in the civil war period.

The official and semi-official versions of his childhood and

early youth instead of giving facts shed rather some light of his political standing and special Party function at the time of publication.

The forty-sixth volume of the second edition of the Large Soviet Encyclopedia was signed to the press in February 1957, three months before Khrushchev reached power in June of that year. Under KHRUSHCHEV the Encyclopedia gives this account of the first thirty-three years of his life:

Khrushchev, Nikita Sergeyevich, was born April 17, 1894, in a mineworker's family in the village of Kalinovka in the Kursk province. As a child he worked as a herdsman and then as a metal worker in the factories and mines of the Donbass. In 1918 N. S. Khrushchev joined the Communist Party. He was an active participant in the Civil War on the Southern front. After the end of the Civil War, he worked in the Donbass in a mine, then he studied at the workers' faculty of the Donbass industrial institute.

There are other versions too, most of them Khrushchev's own. When he became Party Secretary of the Ukraine, it was stressed that his birthplace, Kalinovka, is just a few miles from the Ukrainian border and that he came of a Ukrainian peasant family. To the builders of the Moscow underground he spoke as a former fitter, to ironworkers as a descendant of true-blue Russian metalworkers. To the Polish coalminers he reminisced about the coalmining days of his early youth:

"When I smelt the coaldust here, I remembered my youth when I worked in a mine. This smell is dearer to me than all other aromas."

To Russian coalminers he once said: "I was once a lackey of the imperialists working in one of their coal pits. I worked as a miner for British, French and Germans."

At a Danish Embassy reception he told those standing around him: "As a young man I worked in chemical factories owned by British, French and Belgian concerns."

In one of his first speeches in the Ukraine he told his peasant-audience: "My parents were *muzhiks*, the poorest of the poor. . . . We went hungry to bed most nights."

In a Stettin speech he gave this version:

"I used to tend the cows on my father's farm until I was fifteen. Then I told him I wanted to go to school and he did not

stand in my way. After a year or two I had learnt to count up to thirty and my father decided that was enough of schooling. He said all I needed was to be able to count money and I could never have more than thirty roubles to count anyway."

In Hollywood he said: "I herded cows for a capitalist before I was fifteen."

On other occasions in Moscow and elsewhere he spoke about the reed-and-mud hut where he was born, the son of a coalminer and a factory-hand mother. At times he mentioned that his father hired him out as a shepherd-boy. In Moscow, stories were circulated that his shepherd-career was cut short when he fell asleep and many of the sheep were stolen.

We shall see that Khrushchev worked in fact in the heavy industrial region of Donbass in various mines and factories for several years before and during the first world war. These were years of drifting, of changing jobs frequently. During the summers he worked as a harvest labourer. So he has reason to talk of his miner, peasant and iron-worker past. But as he has always mentioned his past occupations whenever possible, it is curious that in none of his many speeches to Red Army men, neither in his speeches as a Lieut.-General during the second world war, did he mention anything about his activities during the first war. Although he was twenty years old in 1914 there is no mention in any of his official biographies of his military service or why and how he avoided it. It seems certain that he did not serve in the armed forces. It could only have been defence work, physical disability or family connections which kept him out of the tsarist armies.

Family connections are not ruled out by those Russian and Ukrainian emigré circles who believe that Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev's father was a Sergey Nikolayevich Khrushchev, a Kalinovka landowner, who according to an 1898 St. Petersburg "Adres-Kalendar" was a functionary of the Tsarist Ministry of Internal Affairs. This S. N. Khrushchev took part in anti-tsarist activities and, after his group was exposed, lost both his rank and his estate. He then went on living in Kalinovka as a poor farmhand and an occasional coalminer.

Khrushchev's *patronymic*, Sergeyevich, means that his father's name was Sergey. But although a Sergey Nikolayevich Khrushchev certainly existed and lived at times in Kalinovka, it cannot

be proved that Nikita was his son. An even more far-fetched version in Russian emigré circles asserts that this S. N. Khrushchev was related to a member of the Kerenski Government, to the Kadet-party Assistant-Minister of Finance, Khrushchev.

As the archives of Kursk province, to which Kalinovka belonged, were destroyed during the civil war, there is no means of producing documentary proof for or against Sergey Nikolayevich Khrushchev having been Khrushchev's father. All the circumstantial evidence, however, makes this version of Khrushchev's origin highly improbable. Déclassé landowners and demoted ministerial functionaries rarely became so destitute or devoid of family or other connections as to be forced to hire out their sons as shepherd-boys and not to be able to give them more education than one or two years at the local elementary school. In the Soviet system it is next to impossible for anyone, let alone a man in a controversial position, to keep his "class-hostile" origins secret. For a Party man to lie about his origins to the Party is the greatest of crimes. It is most unlikely that among his thousands of rivals and/or victims none should have denounced this crime of his to the OGPU—had he committed it.

According to an early version father Khrushchev was a blacksmith, owner of a small house, two cows and a vegetable garden. During the winter months he worked in a nearby coal pit.

Young Nikita left Kalinovka when he was fifteen or sixteen and went south to the Ukrainian Don Basin where there was plenty of work. During the years before the first world war the heavy industrial complex of the Donbass was growing very swiftly. There were British, French, Belgian and German financed mines and iron works. According to some accounts, Khrushchev became an apprentice fitter in the Donbass coal mines and later worked as a fitter in various factories of the Yuzovka (now Stalino) region. It seems that he changed jobs frequently. Hostile accounts would have it that he was often sacked for absenteeism and/or laziness. During the summers he liked to work as a harvester. In Party circles it was asserted that he was often sacked for distributing Communist leaflets. Yet there is no evidence of Khrushchev ever having been arrested or sentenced to prison. Had he been in prison before the

revolution, this fact would certainly have been stressed in all his official biographies.

It is much more probable that he was a happy-go-lucky drifter during those turbulent times, a jack-of-all trades, a jolly, stubby peasant lad who loved drinking the potent *Yorsh*—three-quarters beer mixed with one quarter vodka—dancing the Ukrainian *Gopak*, roaring peasant songs in good company, chasing after girls, a muzhik *bon viveur*. Loud, sure of himself, always bubbling over with life, a great talker—this is not far from the Khrushchev presented to the world after he had reached almost unlimited power. That during the decades of the Stalin era he was, or rather tried to be, also an inconspicuous Party functionary and could only very rarely indulge in giving full vent to his roaring and rather crude personality, is not at all surprising. When war broke out he had to control his spirit of adventure and his tendency to drift from jobs and towns to new jobs, new towns and new circles of friends. If he wanted to be exempted from military duties he had to become a steady worker in some branch of industry.

By 1916 he was already married. Having a wife and a child must also have had a stabilising influence on him. He was in steady employment during the war years.

The great upheaval of 1917 found him in the Ukraine. The St. Petersburg explosions reverberated like the echo of distant thunder. Millions of deserters from the crumbling fronts flooded the country. The war against the Germans was still going on and the nightmare of all-out civil war had already started. Civil war and uprisings, revolts, counter-revolts within the great revolution. Epidemics and famines. Soon it was as if entire Russia had been exposed to the fury of all the elements. The people were changed into a hurricane; they tried to survive the mad rage of elements which were themselves. Bands of deserters, bands of robbers, revolutionary and counter-revolutionary armies swept the countryside. Red governments, White governments, bandit governments. Armies marching, fighting, looting, recruiting, confiscating.

Starvation and defeat. Factories closing down, muzhiks burning manor-houses, looting food-stores. Monstrous prices, lynching of hoarders and speculators. Railways breaking down, wild rumours inspiring and terrifying people. Political meet-

ings everywhere and all the time. Agitators shouting on street-corners, newspapers screaming.

Slogans. *Peace at once! All land to the peasants! All factories to the workers! No more ranks, no more privileges!* The lowest of the low, the simple soldiers, the peasants, the workers will rule the land. Treason! Treason from the right, from the left! Accusations and counter-accusations. Arrests by the thousand. Strikes, sabotages. All power to the councils—the soviets—of workers, soldiers and peasants!

Independent Ukraine fighting the Germans, the Reds, the bandits. Cities and provinces changing hands in swift succession. Ukraine under the nationalists, under the Germans, under the Bolsheviks. The simple people have to learn a string of unfamiliar new words: Bolshevik, Menshevik, Kadet, socrev, petruylst. It is terribly important to know these words because each street corner might bring a new challenge as one has to declare one's adherence to unknown parties, factions, armies and governments. The unattached, inarticulate millions of people flutter about madly like birds caught among the flaming trees of a primeval forest on fire.

The year is 1918. There is no sign that the war and the civil war—this hurricane of the people—will end.

One of the nameless millions swept along by the turmoil is Khrushchev, this twenty-four-year-old jack-of-all-trades, a lucky one who managed to avoid and survive more dangers than most young people of his age. Why he joined now—in March 1918—a Yuzovka unit of the Red Guards, is anyone's guess. Were they too aggressively recruiting and did he find it safest to join up? Did he know that this local unit of the Red Guards was under the same command as the First Don Proletarian Regiment? Or was it simply that there was no work at the iron works or in the mines?

The Red Guards and the Ukrainian proletarian regiments were formed to defend the Ukraine against the Germans. He had never dabbled in politics before, he was neither a Red nor a Ukrainian, and he had so far not felt compelled to defend the Motherland against the enemy. Why did he join? Just to belong somewhere in the dangerous times? Or was he attracted by the fiery and very tough Bolsheviks who converted so many simple people?

His childhood and youth, his war-years—he does not like to talk about them too much. The safest bet in these dangerous times is to be inconspicuous. A simple, industrious, cheerful man. One who does as he is told—one of the people. All the leaders, all the parties, factions and commandants like “their” people. He is “people”. Good, trustworthy, enthusiastic “people”. The Red Guards should join the Bolshevik Party? Why not belong to one of the parties? Most people do anyway. What should party people do? Help to keep up the morale of the unit, be very good soldiers, help the party to liberate the country? Yes, of course.

Soon he catches the eye of a Bolshevik Party organiser. It is so obvious that he is a great talker and knows how to carry out orders. It is very difficult to find people for such positions. Khrushchev’s origins are impeccable, a peasant-worker-miner. His identity documents are his rough, broad worker’s hands. He is made party secretary of the regiment.

He does not know much about this party, and nothing about its theories. Now he listens to the private instructions and public speeches of the Bolsheviks. He gets leaflets, reads them and distributes them. As secretary of the party-cell of the regiment, his duties are simple: to speak up for the Bolsheviks, to set a good example as a Red Guard, and to report to his party superiors any sign of opposition to the Bolsheviks.

For two years he is a member of the Red Guards. At times he serves on the Donbass front. After the defeat of the invading Poles, he leaves the Red Guards and his party secretaryship. He returns to his work in the iron works and coal mines of the Yuzovka region.

Khrushchev’s record as a Bolshevik and as a Red Guard during the two civil war years he spent in the Red Army must have been unsatisfactory, otherwise his party would have used him for one of the many tens of thousands of positions in the party apparatus, in government or municipal administration, or in the army. We have ample documentation of the fact that the Bolsheviks were in most desperate need of party personnel. They were forced to leave unfilled not only thousands of posts in the state administration, but even in the party organisation. The number of party members was exceedingly small. In the Smolensk *guberniya* of more than two million inhabitants, for

instance, there were at the end of 1920 less than eleven thousand party members. Typhus epidemics were raging, party personnel had to be drafted into the Cheka battalions, into political posts in the Red Army. Communists had to be used to requisition grain, to act as "party instructors" (organisers) in groups of villages. There was such an unbelievable shortage of personnel that not only town and county party organisations, but even the party committees for entire provinces broke down for weeks because there was no one to do the work. Reports showered into Moscow from the provinces, reporting the "utter confusion" in the provincial party bureaux due to shortage of personnel.

Although the party did everything to train people for the apparatus, Stalin reported in 1923 that provincial party organisations still could not find their own secretaries and had to ask for cadres from Moscow. But "it is very difficult to train party leaders," Stalin said. "This requires five, ten or even more years. It is much easier to conquer this or that country with the help of Comrade Budjenny's cavalry than to train two or three leaders from the rank and file."

Three years before this report the shortage of personnel was naturally far greater, yet Khrushchev was permitted to leave the Red Guards and the Bolshevik party organisation. The only explanation of this is that during the 1918-20 period of chaos and utter disruption of economic life, of transport and communication, of state and party administration, a regimental or cell party-secretary was largely on his own. If he was a fanatic or very ambitious, he did work even in the impossible circumstances, but if he did not care particularly for paper-work and long hours after his ordinary duties, he could completely neglect his party activities. This is what Khrushchev must have done, otherwise the Party would not have permitted him to return to his trade.

His role in the civil war was promoted twenty years later. The official *History of the Communist Party—Short Course* written under Stalin's direction in 1937, includes Khrushchev among the great Bolshevik *political educators* of the Red Army, although he joined that army only in March 1918 and received his secondary education in a workers' school only during the 1922-5 period:

The Red Army was victorious because . . . the political education of the Red Army was in the hands of men like Lenin, Stalin, Molotov, Kalinin, Sverdlov, Kaganovich, Ordjonikidze, Kirov, Kuibyshev, Mikoyan, Zhdanov, Andreyev, Petrovsky, Yaroslavsky, Yezhov, Dzerzhinsky, Shchadenko, Mekhlis, *Khrushchev*, Shvernik, Shkiryatov, and others. (Chapter eight, section 5/6.)

The list is that of twenty-one Bolshevik leaders. Khrushchev certainly was not one of them in 1918. But he was not a "political educator" either, otherwise he would not have been sent back to the mines to work as a simple miner which is what happened. His inclusion simply means that at the time when Stalin passed for printing the first edition of the party history, Khrushchev was already an important member of the dictator's closest entourage.

Whether he was a great educator of the Red Army or a little man on the fringe of the Bolshevik Party, it is a fact that in 1920 Khrushchev again became a simple workman.

The return to civilian life did not mean a quiet peaceful life for Khrushchev or the other demobbed thousands. There were epidemics, famine and a galloping inflation. Less than one third of the factories were working, many mines were closed down and those in operation worked only spasmodically. There was no food to be had at official prices and from their wages—if they ever had any—the workers could buy next to nothing on the black market. Khrushchev, like most other workers often roamed the countryside engaged in petty bartering for food in the villages. These "bag-trading" outings were exhausting and dangerous excursions. Because of the brutal food requisitionings by the Red Army and the Cheka, the peasants were in a violent mood. Requisitioners were often attacked. In the second half of 1920 and during 1921 there were many peasant revolts all over the country. The Ukraine, the grain country, was one of the most rebellious parts of the Soviet Union. The peasants whom Khrushchev met cursed the Communists. Danger from the Germans and the Poles and the White Generals was over; the peasants suffered now under the government of the Communists.

Khrushchev and the thousands like him did not talk about their party membership during these bag-trading excursions.

They tried to trade in as quickly as possible the boots, eider-downs, cigarette lighters and other "city stuff" for as much lard, flower and meat as they could get. Like most bag-traders, Khrushchev too worked also on a commission basis for neighbours and acquaintances in the city. Laden with city goods they roamed the villages, trying to avoid revolts or the liquidations of revolts, when the dreaded Cheka shot everyone on sight.

Back in the city economic disruption made life grim and dangerous. Conscription soon began again. First the Red Guard were changed into "Labour Armies" doing industrial, transportation and other "essential work" for army pay, later the industrial workers were militarised; thousands of workers were conscripted in every industrial district to do their normal work under military discipline, for army pay.

With too many bag-trading excursions one risked being sent into the "Labour Army" by the factory or mine management because of too much absenteeism. No bag-trading meant near starvation; too much bag-trading meant conscription leading virtually to forced labour. It was difficult to survive.

In the villages it was dangerous to be a Communist, in the towns, in the mines and factories it was at times risky not to be one. The thing was to be clever, to be lucky, to take quick decisions. Although most of the peasants and a great many of the workers were disgusted with the Communist rulers, and wanted "Soviets without Communists"—the shrewd ones could guess that Party membership was a good defence against conscription and against the Cheka and might even be good for one's future.

Khrushchev again visited the Communist Party meetings and soon became secretary of one of the cells. A cell-secretary is of course not a member of the Party apparatus. He represents and leads only a cell, some ten to thirty Party members, and his position in the hierarchy is well below even the lowest of the full-time Party officials. He is not yet a "cadre", a trusted activist whom the Party might send to any position, from directing a mine to commanding a battalion or directing a county Party committee. But there are chances.

Khrushchev, in trying to exploit his second chance in the Party, was in for a great shock. The Communist Party was now

astonishingly different from the one he had drifted into in 1918. Although some of the slogans and names remained the same, they had now new and puzzling meanings and the whole Party had become grim, severe, enigmatic, dangerous.

In 1918 it was still similar to normal political parties as one understood them. It was a voluntary association of people who believed in its aims or in its ultimate victory. Although it was in power, several opposition parties existed legally. Within the Party one could speak freely. There were debates, disagreements, even political fights between the ever-changing factions. One could form minority factions and try to persuade the majority to accept one's views. There were real debates in the Party committees, and in the supreme executive decisions were taken by majority vote.

Even some of the great Lenin's proposals were sometimes defeated by a majority vote of the Central Committee. Lenin did not yet denounce everybody who did not agree with him as a traitor to the revolution and an enemy of the proletariat.

There were many debates. The opposition parties, the various soviets and the trade unions criticised and attacked government decisions. The Cheka did not yet act as an organ of censorship. At times even the Communist newspapers were open forums for the views of opposing Party factions.

Khrushchev soon found out, that now, in 1920 everything had changed. One had to act and speak quite differently if one didn't want to get into serious trouble. Most things which he had picked up about the Party he now had to unlearn. The Party was swiftly turning into that enigmatic monolith which during the years to come was to shape Khrushchev to its own image.

The years since the revolution had persuaded or forced Lenin and his lieutenants to abandon their beliefs in the democratic method, in free speech, in the temporary tolerance of the multi-party system, in a government by a network of councils—even to modify the trust and liking they felt for the "masses".

Starving Red Army units rebelled, deserted or formed themselves into bandit groups. There were hundreds of peasant revolts. The grim dissatisfaction of the starving industrial workers was expressed in strikes, sabotages, in mass-absenteeism.

The proletariat turned against the Bolshevik rulers. The

village councils, and most other soviets on all levels were highly critical of, or openly hostile to, the government. The trade unions protested. The revolution for which Lenin and his group had worked all their lives was now in danger, not from class enemies and imperialists, but from the people themselves. Knowing—or persuading themselves—that it was for the “ultimate good of the people”, the Bolsheviks turned against the people as they had turned against most of their former political principles. All opposition parties were denied legal existence. Independent opinions, debates and factions within the Communist Party were strictly forbidden. Rule by council was liquidated by making the soviets on all levels simple instruments for carrying out central orders. The same thing happened to the trade unions. The “Red Terror” introduced in September 1918 was originally directed only against class enemies. The Cheka had left peasants and workers alone. Now it turned against all “enemies of the revolution”, all enemies that is of Leninist party and government dictatorship. Lenin and his companions annihilated all the political parties, the Communist Party included, and transformed the latter into the supreme instrument of dictatorship.

The Communist rulers ceased to be members of a normal government: they acted as military dictators in a state-of-siege situation. Their military commandant mentality became a fixed characteristic, pervading the entire Party apparatus.

Although these changes were slow in filtering down to the lowest reaches of the Party, Khrushchev and his like realised that they could not trifle with their Party. It was no longer like joining a club, it was not even like a political party among the many. It was the only party, The Party, something hard to understand and increasingly dangerous to displease. It was at such times that his work-mates began to call Khrushchev a *Vydvizhenets*—“one who has pushed himself forward”—the Russian counterpart of the *debrouillard*.

Being a cell-secretary, one of several in the mine, had a curious effect. People started to be unfriendly even to Party members; a cell-secretary soon found out that his former friends were not at ease with him. Many argued with him, complained to him against *his* party. One had to argue, defend the Party, read newspapers, think about these puzzling things.

"Three years of bloodshed, three years of hunger," they would say, "and look, where are we with your party? Starvation, *kasha* (chaos), the soviet government fighting against our village and factory soviets. Unemployment, factories not working, trains not going, conscription, this is what your revolution has brought us."

They would take from their pockets crumpled newspaper articles from last year, when dissenting Communists could still manage to get into print. A passage was marked with a thumb-nail—a question which an old Communist revolutionary had put to Lenin:

The workers ask—who are we? Are we really the prop of the class dictatorship, or are we just an obedient flock that serves as support for those who, having severed all ties with the masses, carry out their own policy . . . under the reliable cover of the Party label?

Of course, it was easy to roar: "What do you think, you fool? Are Lenin and Trotsky fighting for some other class? . . . And are they to blame for the war, the Germans, the Poles, for the bad harvest?"

It was easy to find some answer, but it was curious that the councils, the soviets, had so little power. Even a cell-secretary knew that the government of the soviets was starting to be against the soviets of the villages, of the factories and towns.

But there was little time to ponder. There was work in the mine, in the Party, and on Sunday one had to go to some village to get food for the family.

By that time, life was even grimmer. The 1920 famine was far worse than the 1917 one. Party work increased. The others could go home after their shift, but he had to sit down, read instructions, write reports, talk things over with the Party secretary of the mine or even of the district of the town. Communist rule had many enemies. One had to watch out.

Then in 1921 came the Kronstadt explosion! Kronstadt, the original stronghold of the revolution, the base of the revolutionary sailors'-rising against the Communist government! Their slogan was: "Soviets without Communists! . . . Give back the power to the soviets!" It was March and trustworthy Red Army troupes were marching across the frozen Bay of Finland

to crush the revolt. The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party was sitting. Lenin ordered most members of the Congress to join General Tukhachevsky's troops storming Kronstadt. The revolt must be suppressed.

A large part of the Red Fleet joined the revolt. The rebels wanted to do away with Communist Party dictatorship, they wanted a return to "normal soviet rule" in a multi-party system. They were against the Cheka and against all political and economic oppression.

Communist Party people everywhere went through uneasy days. Those, like Khrushchev, who did not join the Party out of burning faith or ideological obsession, had moments when they cursed themselves for their folly. If the Kronstadt revolt spread—this they knew—that would soon be the end of Communist dictatorship. There would be instead council rule in a multi-party system. "The peasants are against us (or them), the workers have enough of this dictatorship and the Red Army? What is an army but workers and peasants in uniform? Look at the many regiments in revolt! Look at the Red Fleet!"

Kronstadt was stormed, the revolt was crushed. But even grimmer times followed. Lenin said that the Kronstadt rising "was the flash which lit up reality better than anything else". The reality was that the workers and peasants had enough of Communist dictatorship, hence the workers and peasants had to be brought to their senses. The Tenth Party Congress virtually banned all discussion within the Party and officially transformed the trade unions into organs for oppressing the workers. No longer would trade unions defend the rights of the workers against the state, proprietor of all factories. The workers now could not even defend themselves against the trade unions, which they were compelled to join.

There was only one bright aspect of the new developments. The "flash lighting up reality" persuaded Lenin and the Party Congress that "the direct transition to purely Socialist forms, to purely Socialist distribution, was beyond our strength, and that, unless we proved to be able to retreat and confine ourselves to easier tasks, we would be threatened with disaster."

To avoid disaster the New Economic Policy was introduced allowing the return of private enterprise in small and medium industry and trade. Food requisitioning was stopped and even

foreign capitalists were invited to re-open their businesses. At the same time political oppression was intensified.

Life became very strange. The private industrialists and merchants, the "Nepmen", started to work and produce goods; there was competition, the prices started to get a little bit more reasonable. But how soon these Nep-people got rich again! What a cleavage there was between them and the workers! The peasants also started to prosper again. Only the workers went without. Soon it wasn't so bad to be a Communist official. The workers knew that the Communists were really against the Nepman, that the whole NEP was only a temporary policy with them. A Communist, like Khrushchev, was not very popular, but people were no longer openly unfriendly. Power is respected. People knew that one had connections, that one came into official contact with Chekists.

Officially the Cheka, this forerunner of the OGPU, NKVD, MVD was still the organ of the class war, the "fist of the working classes". Latsis, one of the Cheka commanders, wrote in the November 1, 1918, issue of the Cheka paper *Krasny Terror* (Red Terror):

Do not search for incriminating evidence as to whether a person opposed the Soviet with arms or with words. Your first duty is to ask him what class he belongs to, what were his origins, education and occupation. It is these questions which should decide the fate of the accused. This is the meaning and essence of the Red Terror.

After the wholesale liquidation of the "exploiting classes" and political enemies, the Cheka had by now become the instrument of total terror. A rough, work-hardened hand was no longer sufficient proof of loyalty for the Chekists. They arrested workers and peasants by the thousands.

When the cell-secretaries were summoned to the Party committee in charge, Khrushchev now often met representatives of the Cheka. They asked questions and made comments which sounded like instructions. One had the impression at times as if the taciturn and morose Chekist present was the superior of the committee secretary.

In 1922 there was possibility of a hard but adventurous means of pushing oneself forward. Party functionaries all over

the Soviet Union were looking for trustworthy workers and poor peasants who could be sent to the newly created Party schools or "faculties" for adult workers. For a Party school Khrushchev did not have enough qualification. But there were the three year secondary school courses for adult workers called workers' faculties (*Rabochii Fakultet*) intended by the government to prepare adult workers for low and medium jobs in industrial management or for subsequent higher training. The candidate had to be between 25 and 30 years old, had to be literate, acquainted with the rudiments of arithmetic, had to have been employed for at least six years in industry or agriculture, and had to be a Party member of at least four years standing. Khrushchev could satisfy all these conditions and in addition he had two years' civil war record as a Red Guard.

In the entire Ukraine there were then only eight "*Rabfaks*" with about fifteen hundred students. Those enrolled were called by the press "members of the select Party thousands", the future builders of a mighty Soviet industry.

Khrushchev, now twenty-eight years old, applied and was taken on. The government gave the *Rabfak* students an exceedingly small stipend, but they could live in the school dormitory. They knew that for the next three years, life would be hard and different from anything they had known, but with this they could prepare the way for great advancement: they might go on to a university, they might become managers of factories or mines, they might become almost anything.

We do not know what happened to Khrushchev's family during the *Rabfak* years. We do not even know during which of the famines the first Mrs. Khrushcheva died. It is probable though that when he entered the *Rabfak* he was already a widower. Whether his two children were with his parents or at a Party boarding school, for the next few years he must have seen very little of them.

II

THE PARTY-BIRTH OF KHRUSHCHEV

“**WORKERS’** Faculty attached to the Donets Mining School in Yuzovka”; a matter-of-fact name for an institute of adult education. Had it been called a purgatory for the Party faithful, Khrushchev and hundreds of his fellow students would still have had no idea of what was in store for them. They were prepared for, and not a little afraid of, much hard learning. That of course was also expected from them. They were prepared for an extremely frugal existence. The crowded, mostly unheated dormitories and the most inferior and scant food they got surpassed their worst expectations. But they were not prepared for the purgatory of being remoulded to the image of a party which during these years was in turn remoulding itself to an ever grimmer, ever more adamant and unpredictable pattern.

In the *Rabfak* they were under the eye of the Party. All of them had already run the gauntlet of two Party purges. The first, in 1919, as ordered by a Central Committee circular entailed “a basic investigation of the entire personnel of the Party” and the “purge of the Party of . . . people who attached themselves to the Party because of its leading position and who use the title of Party member for their own personal interests”. But this purge was mild compared with the general purge in 1921, when the Central Control Commission of the Party ordered the holding of *public* purge-sessions. At the seat of each Party organisation, the local control commissions organised public purge-meetings, open to Communists and non-Communists alike. Each member of the Party, from Secretary down to the most insignificant member, had to get up, give an account of himself, answer questions and listen while his Party comrades and rivals and very often his non-Party enemies got up and passed judgment on his character, shortcomings, mistakes or even crimes. Anyone in the audience had the right to defend or make accusations. It was as if one’s entire private life were exposed to a very harsh, cruelly glaring light, illuminating all the shady corners,

magnifying and distorting little incidents. The Control Commissions were anxious not to err in being too lenient. A bit of spiteful gossip, entirely unfounded, often carried more weight than the testimony of a trusted friend. ("It's a friend of his," someone would shout from the audience and the stern-faced men behind the table on the rostrum would look significantly at each other.) As one stood there, exposed to hundreds of hostile, neutral, interested or sympathetic eyes, one had to be tough indeed, self-controlled and a good talker not to start sweating, stammering and condemning oneself by one's own dithering.

The spirit of this first purge was already inspired by Stalin, who indirectly controlled the Control Commission. Lenin knew this because in May 1922, he addressed a letter to Stalin with the complaint that "the purging of the Party revealed the prevalence in the majority of local investigation committees of personal spite and malice." (*The Essentials of Lenin*, II/809.) Lenin did not mention it but everybody knew that there was a close liaison between the Cheka and the Control Commission on all levels. One always wondered which of the investigators was a Chekist.

Khrushchev and his fellow students all went through these purges. What they did not know was that in the *Rabfak* they were already in the constant-purge atmosphere of the Party. They not only had to study their subjects and Marxism, but during all their waking hours spent in the watchful collectivity of the school, they had to behave as real Communists. And it took them years to realise how difficult it is to guess what a *real* Communist is.

Periodically they had general discussion meetings dealing with "the problems of the school and its students", very similar to the later criticism-self-criticism sessions for exposing the hidden enemies within oneself and within the collectivity.

The students had to study algebra, geometry, trigonometry, physics, chemistry, Russian language and literature, German language, Marxist political economy and Marxism in general. They had their regular Party-cell meetings, *Pravda* readings, and had to take part in Party life.

We have no documentary evidence for the level of requirements in the secondary school subjects. The fact that only an

exceedingly small proportion of *Rabfak* students then entered higher technological institutions or universities, makes it probable that the standard was rather low. Whatever the original aims of the Party, the *Rabfaks* gave a smattering of general knowledge in mathematics, physics and chemistry. The graduates, as trustworthy representatives of the Party were supposed to be able to check up on the "bourgeois experts", that is on non-Party engineers and technologists in their future place of work. Although some *Rabfak*-men of exceptional talent and diligence became excellent engineers, most of them turned into Party representatives and controllers in industrial management.

They were members of the handpicked "Party thousands". The main thing was to turn them into trustworthy Communists, loyal to their Party chiefs, perfect cogs-on-the-wheel in the Party mechanism. Therefore the *Rabfaks* were permeated by the spirit of the real Party schools, these Marxist seminaries, very similar to Stalin's orthodox theological seminary.

The dogma—despite all its rationality and materialism—was something mysterious and frighteningly wonderful for these barely literate and certainly not very articulate people. None of them had any secondary education and most of them had only one or two years at a village elementary school. Being adults, the time of turmoils taught them many things. They learnt about war and politics the hard way. Some of them even read pamphlets and newspapers. But of the great world outside Russia they knew next to nothing. Their knowledge of Russian history was based on a few legends and folk-stories of olden times. Of the history of the world and other peoples they knew what the Church and the Bible taught them.

For the younger generations in the second half of the twentieth century it is difficult to grasp the primitiveness of the semi-literate Russian muzhiks. Not because those were the pre-cinema, pre-radio and pre-TV days—the reason was the lack of school-facilities, the exceedingly long working hours, and living standards which seem cruelly low to citizens of welfare states. Khrushchev belonged to the transition type: to the muzhiks who were slowly turning into industrial workers. But during the many years of war and civil war only the politically most conscious workers had had the interest and the will-power

to go on reading and learning. Khrushchev, as we have seen, was certainly not of this type.

But now, after the Party purges, after his second chance in the Party, he too had the ambition to "better himself intellectually". The revolution itself meant to most of his kind a revolt against the prison of poverty. Marxism was presented to them as a possibility of escaping the prison of mental poverty. There is a great deal of evidence that the barely literate peasants and workers who set themselves to study this strange something hoped to find in it an easy way to acquire the cultural riches of the upper-classes. If Marxism was "the opium of the intellectuals" it appeared as a "magic stone of wisdom" to the culturally underprivileged.

How intellectuals were converted to Communism and what effect Marxism had on them has been often and very ably described and analysed. Marx and Engels, the fathers of the dogma, were themselves middle-class intellectuals whose emotional-obsessional start was prompted by the very real shock, anger, indignation and pity they felt at the sight of the plight of mid-nineteenth-century workers and peasants. Children and women working in the pits, twelve hours' drudgery for a pittance in dark, insanitary factory buildings, devoid of safety devices, the terrible slums, the virtual serfdom of Eastern European peasantry and the "infamy of colonial slavery"—a synoptic vision of all these nineteenth-century evils provided the initial shock, the moment of conversion to the cause. The theoretical edifice of the cause—Marxism—is just as deeply rooted in the nineteenth-century situation as its emotional make-up.

The intellectual leaders and adherents of the Party, in spite of their university education and very wide culture, were blinkered against any and every critical analysis of the theory by their obsessional start, by their sense of guilt and human solidarity. Marxism, moreover, is a closed system of thought and as such it is by its very nature oblivious and intolerant of any other system of thought.

The cultured intellectual after embracing Marxism had to relinquish, often through a very painful process, his old habit of thinking, discussing and arguing. The possibility that the opponent of Marxism can be right in the least little detail is

firmly excluded. A Marxist must be immune to outside argument. Marxism, as the supreme science of human society, and Marxist dialectics, the method for every science, are infallible.

An uneducated man, like Khrushchev, had no intellectual habits to give up. His complete acceptance of Marxist theory was not hindered by a previous cultural background. He knew no science, no other system of thought, no other philosophy, no other economic theory but the Marxist one.

The mental world of the intellectual undergoing conversion to Communism was invaded by battalions of Marxist thought and patterns of knowledge. The Marxist occupation troops annihilated or expelled the untenable concepts and systems of knowledge, while the rest was subdued or transformed.

In the case of the uneducated—like Khrushchev—the invasion of Marxist culture and dogma found an empty land where Marxist principles and Marxist knowledge of the world became the first and only settlers. To acquire knowledge meant to acquire Marxism. One of the students in another *Rabfak* asked his teacher: “Why do we have two names for the same thing: science and Marxism?” Others thought that the words “liberal” and “confused” are interchangeable synonyms.

The Marxists whom Khrushchev met were immensely sure of themselves. They could—according to his impression—calmly and simply refute and annihilate any counter-arguments. For a really good Marxist the world with all its puzzles is not a terribly complicated, incalculable and unknowable thing, but something easy to understand and explain.

Thoughts are simple tools if you are taught how to use them. And if you have learnt thinking (that is: Marxism) then it is of little importance how cultured you are. Marxism teaches you what makes the human world and the world of nature tick. Marxism gives the simple worker immense superiority over the confused intellectuals, over the aristocrats and millionaires of the mind. The revolution gives all this intellectual superiority to the workers. Lenin is right when he says that Marxist theory is a terribly strong weapon.

The Party schools and the *Rabfaks* were busy in these years turning out thousands of Party products, like Khrushchev. Their thinking mechanism, their methods of generalisation, of

making abstractions, their concepts and mental reactions were mass-produced by the Party's version of Marxist (later Marxist-Leninist and Stalinist) dogma. In complete ignorance of other possible ways of thinking, undisturbed by the knowledge of non-Marxist history, by knowledge of the world or by any glimpse of the non-Communist world, their "mind", their culture, all their knowledge became "Marxism". Should they during subsequent years turn against the Party, they discover that every scrap of knowledge in their head is Party-knowledge. Hence if they want to break with the Party, they first have to throw out all the furniture of knowledge in their brains, which then have to be furnished completely anew.

Khrushchev and his fellow-students learnt that the stars in heaven, the sun, the earth, all life on the earth, every activity is governed by scientific laws. These are like the laws ordered by the Tsar or by the police except that they are stronger laws, because no human beings, no armies, nothing can change them. What these scientific laws ordain is inevitable. It happens whether we like it or not.

At first this is difficult to grasp. One learns words and sentences by heart. But soon one gets the knack of it. Marx explains things so simply:

Men . . . in changing their mode of production, in changing the way of earning their living, they change all social relations. The hand-mill gives you society with the feudal lord; the steam-mill: society with the industrial capitalist.

Now we already have large-scale machine industry which corresponds to Socialism. It is *inevitable* that the revolution of the proletariat should introduce this "highest social form". With this revolution the proletariat will free for ever the whole society from exploitation, oppression and class struggles.

If nobody owns the means of production, then there will be no capitalism. See? Revolution is the only way out. Proletarian revolution is ordered by the inevitable law of social development.

You just learn by heart: "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness."

What does this mean? Well, that it is not the ideas in your head that make you into what you are, but your being what you are makes you have such and such ideas. Your situation, the social conditions in which you live, govern your ideas. These social conditions are independent of men's will or of their ideas. The laws of society change everything.

But should not we will revolution? Are not our revolutionary ideas important? . . . Of course. But our will for a revolution, our Bolshevik ideas are really produced by the social conditions of today. It is all simple and inevitable.

You learn by heart: "The activity of the Bolshevik party must not be based on the good wishes of 'outstanding individuals', not on the dictates of 'reason', 'universal morals', etc., but on the laws of development of society and on the study of these laws."

You see, it is unimportant to know a lot about the deeds of kings, great generals, about politicians, writers and their like. It is unimportant to know a lot of historical dates and other mumbo-jumbo the bourgeois fill their heads with. You, the simple worker, by being a worker, can understand the laws of society. The bourgeois, however "cultured", is confused, he cannot really understand what makes society tick.

The bourgeois believe in "eternal truth", "eternal morals", "eternal justice", which—we, the workers, know—is in reality *bourgeois* truth, *bourgeois* morals and *bourgeois* justice. The bourgeois state with its democracy and legality is in reality: class dictatorship. The proletariat by its revolution replaces it by its own dictatorship. You must learn by heart Lenin's statement:

The scientific concept, dictatorship, means neither more nor less than unlimited power resting directly on force, not limited by anything, not restrained by any laws or any absolute rules. *Nothing else but that.*

Dictatorship is in the nature of things. Dictatorship is a good, democratic thing. After all one learnt from Lenin himself that the real meaning of democracy is—dictatorship:

Democracy is a state which recognises the subordination of the minority to the majority, i.e., an organisation for the systematic use of violence by one class against the other, by one section of

the population against the other (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1937, Vol. IX, p. 70).

And again:

Soviet Socialist democratism does not in any way contradict one-man management and dictatorship; the will of the class is sometimes given effect by a dictator who sometimes does more alone and often is more necessary (Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russian edition, Vol. XXX, p. 444).

If you don't understand something, if you—in your ignorance—feel that there are certain contradictions, you had better keep silent about them. It can only mean that you are stupid or have hidden enemies within yourself, some bourgeois ideas you must have picked up.

There are for instance those who constantly bellyache about the Red Terror, about the cruelty of the Cheka. There are those who say that after all the “has-beens”, the people of former days, are also human beings. They can't help it if they were born into rich families. Why punish them, why punish their children? It's not right.

People say these things in their ignorance. Lenin gave the answer:

We repudiate all morality that is taken outside human class concepts. We say that this is deception, a fraud, which clogs the brains of the workers and peasants in the interests of the landlords and capitalists (*Selected Works*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1937, Vol. IX, p. 495).

The thing is to unclog one's brain. One's brain will be free of all landlordist and capitalist nonsense only if one learns real class-knowledge from the Party.

In various speeches Khrushchev often mentioned how hard he strove at the *Rabfak* to master the sciences. He certainly must have excelled in learning Marxism and in behaving as a loyal party-man, because barely a year after his entering the school, the Yuzovka City Party Committee sent his name to the *Rabfak* Party Committee as the comrade who should be elected Party secretary. The *Vydvizhenets*—“one who pushed himself forward”—was now pushed forward by his superiors in the Party

apparatus. The *Rabfak* had several Party cells. Khrushchev became the superior of all the cell-secretaries—in fact the most important man is the *Rabfak*, in real influence outranking even the director of the school and all the teaching staff. He became the representative and the watchdog of the Party over the entire school, over all the teachers and students.

A factory, a school, a kolkhoz or any other “unit” is under a dual control in the Soviet system: that of the government and that of the Party. In the case of the *Rabfak*, government control resided ultimately in the Commissariat for Education and that for the mining industry. The “governmental” head of the *Rabfak* was its director. But as the entire government organisation is under the direction and control of the Party, the Party secretary has to check up and report on the work of the director. Party direction and control itself now started to split into open and direct control by the Party apparatus on the one hand and into less open and less direct control by the Cheka on the other. Khrushchev, as Party secretary, was directly in touch with that officer of the Yuzovka Cheka, who watched over the *Rabfak*.

As Number One man in the school of which he was still a student, Khrushchev experienced now even more strongly than during his cell-secretaryship the curious change in his relationship to his fellow-students and to his teachers. They knew perfectly well that he had to assess their loyalty to the Party, their political reliability, their character, toughness, enthusiasm in their work—on everything. A Party secretary has access to the secret personal files. He can and does read the autobiographies everybody has to hand in periodically at his place of work and to the Party; the questionnaires about one's antecedents; all the minutes of the former Party-purge meetings concerning one's person and all those signed and unsigned denunciations the Party gets about people. He even might know how much the Cheka knew about one.

One naturally pretends to be the same jolly old schoolmate with the new Secretary but there is some artificiality in all this. People give a sigh of relief when they are out of his presence. Friends? Of course he has friends. But they *know* that a good Communist, a real Communist functionary must not be influenced by his private emotions. There is only one loyalty: that to the Party.

There are moments of chill and loneliness for the sensation-ally successful student. But he is very busy with his school-work, with his Party work, with the many meetings he has to attend. He has to prepare the meetings of his own committee, but before those he must take part in meetings at the Yuzovka Party Headquarters. He has confidential sessions with his superiors in the apparatus. He has to attend or lead special Party seminars, he has a tremendous amount of paper work. At times the Chekist drops in. There are long discussions. He sleeps very little, he is never alone—how stupid to feel lonely at times. Life is full, tremendously full. It is like being caught in a swiftly moving stream.

A Party secretary, a man of the apparatus has a difficult time. He must read *Pravda* and the local Party paper with a great deal of attention. The Party line changes, there are new formulations or slight alterations in the officially obligatory formulations. He must notice these slight changes, and master their implications. True enough, the *Agit-Prop* (agitation and propaganda) people at the Yuzovka Party House give out periodical directives, there are new pamphlets and confidential propaganda instructions, but one has to watch also the Moscow *Pravda* because the line might have changed overnight.

Khrushchev has to turn himself into a smooth and good impromptu orator and a calm debater. He likes to speak and can speak freely, he is not tongue-tied when he has to get up in a committee or an all-*Rabfak* meeting. But he has to be most careful not to be carried away by his sentences, by his emotions. One should never deviate from the Party-language of the day.

He works sixteen, or even eighteen hours a day. Family? He has very little time for his family. He has very little time for amusement, for relaxation. The rank and file members of the Party, his schoolmates, how easy they have it! Khrushchev often looks at them as a worn-out adult looks at carefree children. He is not patronising them yet, but in his position he can't help feeling that he is a person set apart from them.

And what about his "personality" at this stage. He tries to imitate his Party superiors who display a synthetic proletarian serenity. They are calm, quiet, tough, unruffled people who can (on the rare occasions when this is appropriate) be cheerful, jolly fellows, good dancers and drinkers. But of course nothing

in excess. This is not difficult to observe as he is terribly tired anyway. He is tired all the time. When he sits with his committee, he does not mind if people talk a lot. He can rest a bit. He appears to be a patient man who likes to listen to the opinions of others. (In reality he is impatient and does not enjoy listening to a lot of unnecessary nonsense.)

Listening to people also helps to size them up. The secretary is responsible to the Party for finding hidden enemies in its ranks. Has not Lenin said that the Party must be thoroughly cleansed "of rascals, bureaucrats, dishonest or wavering Communists, and of Mensheviks who have repainted their 'façade' but who have remained Mensheviks at heart?"

The cleansing has been going on since 1921. Now, in 1923 the Cheka is looking for clandestine opposition among Communists. Lenin is gravely ill, there is a scramble for succession and secret opposition groups are attacking the dictatorship of the Politbureau over the Party membership. He, as secretary, has to find people with opposition sentiments, otherwise he himself will land in most serious trouble; some ordinary Party members are averse to helping the Cheka find members or adherents of the opposition within the Party. There is some talk already that the Cheka will also arrest those Party members who fail to denounce opposition-minded comrades. Every Party member must co-operate with the Cheka, and the Party secretary must be most vigilant of all if he does not want to appear to be uncooperative.

The opposition attacked the Party apparatus, the system of appointing Party secretaries from above, the absence of free speech within the Party and the hostility of the apparatus to all kinds of criticism.

It was one of the main duties of the "select Party thousands" studying at the *Rabfaks* to learn practical Communism by watching the day-to-day activities of the Party. They had to take an intelligent interest in all political and economic questions. And in the Donbass *Rabfak* it was Khrushchev's duty to make sure of this, to direct and control the discussions.

It was at this time that Trotsky and forty-six other leading Party functionaries issued declarations strongly criticising the Party apparatus and forced the Politbureau to permit a public discussion within the Party. In this period there was a tactical

alliance between Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev in the top leadership. The members of this triumvirate were united only by their desire to stop Trotsky from stepping into the dying Lenin's shoes. Stalin as General Secretary, Zinoviev as President of the Communist International and Chairman of the Petersburg (Leningrad) Soviet, Kamenev as Lenin's official deputy and head of the Moscow Soviet—controlled between them most of the Party and government apparatus. Yet the mood of the country and of the Party members was such that they had to permit an open discussion of the accusations made against their Party dictatorship. The gist of the accusations was that the Party apparatus subordinated to itself the entire Party. Trotsky wrote:

All those ought to be removed from their Party positions who at the first voice of criticism, of objection, of protest are inclined to demand one's Party ticket. . . . In the machine all should feel from top to bottom that nobody dares to terrorise the party.

During this last Party-wide discussion Lenin was on his deathbed and the *troika* (Stalin, Zinoviev, Kamenev) used Lenin's words against the opposition. According to Lenin if Communists do not agree with the leadership—as for instance the Workers' Opposition did in 1922—things must be “discussed with rifles”. A variety of views can only reflect divergent class interests. Factions within the party were forbidden on Lenin's insistence. People were reminded of Lenin's speech at the Eleventh Party Congress:

The Mensheviks say ‘We have always said what you are saying now; permit us to repeat it again’ . . . we say in reply: ‘Permit us to put you up against the wall’ . . . For the public advocacy of Menshevism our revolutionary courts must pass death sentences. (Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russian Edition, p. 253)

A few days before Lenin's death on January 21, 1924, there was a central Party conference to sum up the Party discussion. Here Stalin informed the conference of a secret clause contained in Lenin's proposal to the Tenth Congress according to which the Central Committee should have the right to expel its own members for “factional activities”. So the great Lenin was against free discussion even in the Party Central Committee.

Outside observers might have thought and might still think that Lenin's early death gave the "wily and sadistic Stalin a chance to pervert Communism and the Soviet system". For a Party secretary at the grass-roots like Khrushchev and to the students at the *Rabfak* however it seemed that Stalin was Lenin's faithful disciple and that the discussion demanded by Stalin's opponents was an anti-Party deviation.

For Khrushchev and his schoolmates the word "to discuss" something, meant to talk about it in the proper Party language in order to understand it fully in the way the Party leadership required it to be understood. Party resolutions and the speeches or articles of the leaders are, of course, one hundred per cent correct and wise. One had to "discuss" them in order fully to appreciate their correctness and wisdom. The Western dictionary meaning of the word "to discuss"—to examine by argument or to debate in detail without a predetermined result—meant for them: to attack, to oppose, to slander or in the best case to gossip in confused "petit-bourgeois" manner.

One learnt everything from the Party, the meaning of words included. To use any other meaning was not only stupid but dangerous too. Those in the factories and in the schools who supported the oppositionists, were apt to lose their jobs or school stipends and swelled the ranks of the unemployed. Some were even arrested. As soon as these consequences became obvious to everybody, many people were simply angered by Trotsky's Western usage of the word "discussion". It is no wonder that with the exception of university Party organisations and some factory cells with a high proportion of former Social Democratic workers, the majority of the Party voted against the oppositionists. The *Rabfak* students undergoing Party training for important future work were most reluctant to go into a lot of dangerous hair-splitting by differentiating between "the Party" and "the Party apparatus".

While Trotsky developed grave misgivings with regard to the dictatorship of the apparatus over the Party (of which he approved as long as he thought that it would be *his* apparatus), Lenin on his deathbed was tormented by the nightmare that all his work would come to nothing. Only then did he realise that the dictatorial machine he had built up would either fall into the hands of a ruthless and possibly clumsy dictator, who

might wreck his revolution, or the existence of the apparatus would lead to a fight for succession which would wreck the Party and bring about the defeat of the revolution.

He realised that while concentrating all power in his own hands, he had discarded one by one the possible controls. First he had abolished all other political parties and transformed the councils, the soviets, which gave the régime its name, and the trade unions into the tools of the Party, then subordinated the Party to the apparatus. Freedom of discussion and decision by majority vote had been outlawed, not only in the Party as a whole but even in the Central Committee. The Party apparatus he had handed over to a General Secretary, Stalin, and charged him to apply "the sternest military discipline". The General Secretary was, with his approval, head of the organisation department, the Orgbureau of the Party, and through appropriate liaisons directed the Central Control Commission (watching over the Party) and the secret police (watching over the entire country). Stalin was made General Secretary on April 4, 1922, and Lenin had his first stroke on May 25.

As he lay ill and could learn only from reports what was going on in his government and Party apparatus, he realised the dangers. He had a fanatical trust in his own powers, in his own dedication to the cause. But now he saw the terrible dangers of dictatorship and through a series of letters and articles dictated on his deathbed he tried to dismantle and democratise the monstrous monolith of terrorism and fear he himself had built up.

The tragedy of it all was that the dying dictator was still a captive of his own dogmas and sets of contradictory principles and beliefs.

He wrote his political testament, his final behests to his successors, still believing that a terrorist dictatorship could be somehow "democratised" at the top; that while denying freedom of discussion not only to the whole population but also to the overwhelming majority of the Party, he could introduce freedom of speech and intelligent *democratic* leadership at the top. His main cure for the ills was the enlargement of the Central Committee to fifty or a hundred members. All the new members were to be unspoilt workers and peasants who had not been promoted to governmental or Party posts

during the last five years. He wanted to save the Party by a few scores of workers and peasants *unspoilt by his own régime*.

Being mortally ill, he could treat only a few aspects of the problem. He made no prescription as to how to develop multiple controls. He saw no means of averting the danger of the secret police (which he had created) falling into the hands of an unscrupulous dictator. He did not see the contradiction that if he could trust a few score unspoilt workers and peasants to keep back his successors from splitting the Party, then he could trust the "unspoilt" working-class and peasantry as a whole, and that then the proletariat is mature for full democracy.

We have to deal at some length with Lenin's political testament because it played an extraordinary part in Khrushchev's struggle for power after Stalin's death.

The pertinent sections of the series of letters which constitute Lenin's testament show the perplexity of the dying dictator:

I suggest, as of primary importance, that the size of the Central Committee membership be enlarged to several dozen, possibly even to one hundred members. . . . The enlargement of the C.C. membership . . . should serve, as I see it, two- or three-fold purpose; the more C.C. members there are, the more persons will get to know the C.C. work and the smaller will be the danger of a split as a result of taking some careless step. Enlistment of many workers will help to improve the efficiency of our apparatus, which is very bad. The C.C. staff should be largely enlisted from among the workers who are below the level of the group which was promoted during the last five years to the Soviet apparatus, and from those who are close to the common workers and peasants . . . I think that such workers now attending all C.C. and Politbureau meetings, and having the opportunity to read all C.C. documents—are capable of creating the cadre of loyal supporters of the Soviet system . . . they will . . . add to the stability of the C.C. itself.

It is evident that Lenin thought that these workers and peasants would counterbalance the old professional Bolsheviks, the Party intellectuals and bureaucrats who were constantly fighting and intriguing against each other. Lenin, like Marx, fetishised at times the workers and their "decent working-class instincts" in deciding difficult problems of theory and

practice, although at other times he distrusted the "ideologically undeveloped" workers and felt contempt for their "proletarian instincts".

In another letter Lenin examined a series of considerations of purely personal character and dealt with six of his possible successors:

I think that the fundamental factor in the matter of stability—from this point of view—is such members of the Central Committee as Stalin and Trotsky. The relation between them constitutes, in my opinion, a big half of the danger of that split, which might be avoided, and the avoidance of which might be promoted, in my opinion, by raising the number of members of the Central Committee to fifty or one hundred.

Comrade Stalin, having become General Secretary, has concentrated enormous power in his hand and I am not sure that he always knows how to use that power with sufficient caution. On the other hand Comrade Trotsky, as was proved by his struggle against the Central Committee in connection with the question of the People's Commissariat of Ways of Communication, is distinguished not only by his exceptional abilities—personally he is, to be sure, the most able man in the present Central Committee—but also by his too far-reaching self-confidence and a disposition to be too much attracted by the purely administrative side of affairs. . . .

Of course, both these remarks are made by me merely with a view to the present time, on the assumption that these two able and loyal workers may find occasion to increase their knowledge and correct their one-sidedness.

PS. Stalin is excessively rude, and this defect, which can be freely tolerated in our midst and in contacts among us Communists, becomes a defect which cannot be tolerated in one holding the position of the Secretary General. Because of this, I propose that the comrades consider the method by which Stalin would be removed from this position and by which another man would be selected for it, a man who, above all, would differ from Stalin in only one quality, namely, greater tolerance, greater loyalty, greater kindness and a more considerate attitude toward the comrades, a less capricious temper, etc.

It is obvious that Lenin by his mixture of praise and criticism wanted to persuade his closest collaborators to co-operate with each other. He took good care not to name any one of them as

his successor, and not to break any one of them, with the possible exception of Stalin. He wanted them to work as a team, controlling each other, knowing each other, and being controlled by a hundred unspoilt workers and peasants. He told Kamenev: "let there be no blood split among you".

Meanwhile Stalin who did not yet know about these letters, had a row with Lenin's wife, Krupskaya, who wrote to Kamenev and Zinoviev, asking them to protect her against the "vile invectives and threats" of Stalin. Lenin soon learnt about this and wrote the following letter to Stalin (with copies to Kamenev and Zinoviev):

Dear Comrade Stalin!

You permitted yourself a rude summons to my wife on the telephone and a rude reprimand of her. Despite the fact that she told you that she agreed to forget what was said, nevertheless Zinoviev and Kamenev heard about it from her. I have no intention to forget so easily that which is being done against me, and I need not stress here that I consider as directed against me that which is being done against my wife. I ask you, therefore, that you weigh carefully whether you are agreeable to retracting your words and apologising or whether you prefer the severance of relations between us.

Lenin.

Then Lenin died. The whole country mourned and the entire Party learned the "Oath to Lenin" written and delivered by Stalin in the best orthodox theological seminary manner:

We Communists are people of a special mould. We are those who form the army of the great proletarian strategist, the army of Comrade Lenin. There is nothing higher than the honour of belonging to this army. There is no loftier title than that of member of the Party whose founder and leader is Comrade Lenin. . . .

Departing from us Comrade Lenin adjured us to hold high and guard the purity of the lofty title of member of the Party. We vow to thee, Comrade Lenin, that we shall fulfil honourably this thy commandment. . . .

Departing from us, Comrade Lenin adjured us to guard the unity of our Party as the apple of our eye. We vow to thee, Comrade Lenin, that we shall fulfil honourably this thy commandment too. . . .

Departing from us, Comrade Lenin adjured us to guard and strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat. We vow to thee, Comrade Lenin, that we will spare no effort to fulfil honourably this thy commandment too. . . .

. . . And so on, incantation after incantation.

The almost religious fervour of the oath, the style resembling old orthodox texts, had a great effect on the Party membership, still dazed by the shock of Lenin's death. Stalin dedicated all Communists to fulfil Lenin's "commandments" and filled them with awed pride over having a right to the "lofty title" of Party members. They were called "people of special mould" by Stalin, the obvious successor and prophet of the great Lenin. The "true proletarians" in the apparatus transferred in those days some of their hero-worship from Lenin to Stalin.

The Yuzovka Communists felt that they had special ties to Stalin. For, six months after Lenin's death in July 1924, Yuzovka was renamed Stalino. Khrushchev, as Party secretary of the *Rabfak*, made an enthusiastic speech on this occasion.

After Lenin's death Stalin, Zinoviev, Kamenev and their adherents announced *collective leadership* while manoeuvring against each other and fighting against Trotsky and other "oppositionists". This period of collective leadership and the fight for succession had most important consequences for Khrushchev's career. Although Lenin's testament was suppressed, an important part of the testament was fulfilled by Stalin: the advice to enlarge the Central Committee and the Party apparatus by simple workers and peasants. Stalin seized on this advice, for it served his own aims, quite contrary to those envisaged by the dying Lenin. He instituted a "Lenin call up to the Party" recruiting into his apparatus uncritical and inarticulate workers, loyal to the Party machine. This new Lenin-recruitment and the as yet bloodless purges of Trotskyites resulted in opening Party careers to thousands of men like Khrushchev. He could be reasonably certain that in 1925, when he graduated from the *Rabfak*, he would get a real, full-time Party appointment. It is very unlikely, however, that he ever dreamed of the Yuzovka-Stalino *Rabfak* and the entire mining-school being one day named after Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev.

According to Mme Nina Petrovna Khrushcheva she met her husband in Yuzovka, and married him in 1924.

"I went there as a teacher of political science," she told the Washington reporters, "and he was already a student at the workers' faculty, studying to be a mining engineer. We met in the same city, but I did not teach him anything and he did not teach me."

At that time political science was taught exclusively by Communist Party members, so the second Mrs. Khrushchev must have been one. Did he manage to get rooms then, to leave the dormitory and set up household with his wife and his children? We do not know. It is a fact though that his first child by his second wife, Rada, was born only in 1930.

III

THE "KAGANOVICH-MAN"

"After finishing the workers' faculty N. S. Khrushchev was in leading Party-work in the Donbass and then in Kiev. In 1929 he began to study in the J. V. Stalin Industrial Academy in Moscow where he was elected secretary of the Party committee. From January 1931, N. S. Khrushchev was secretary of the Baumann and then the Krasnopresnenski *raion* Party committee of Moscow."

(Large Soviet Encyclopedia, Vol. 46, 1957)

ON completion of his secondary schooling Khrushchev was taken on by Stalin's Party apparatus. He was given the Party secretaryship of one of the districts in the city of Stalino, that of the Petrovo-Marinsky *raion*. This was a full time Party job of the lowest rank, entailing some modest privileges and many responsibilities.

He was thirty-one years old, barely a year younger than his commander-in-chief, the new Secretary General of the Ukraine, Lazar Moiseyevich Kaganovich, one of Stalin's closest associates. As Molotov had been some years before, Kaganovich was now sent from Moscow to create order and discipline in the Ukraine.

Kaganovich's task was of course different from that of Molotov a few years earlier. He had to remould the Ukrainian Party according to Stalinist pattern. His own recent function made him an ideal choice for this task, for Kaganovich was the head of the Central Personnel and Assignments Department in Moscow. On Stalin's instructions he had evolved the pattern of direction and control of all Party and governmental appointments in the country, thanks to which, through the personnel department, Stalin could make or break anyone in the Soviet state. A long record of successful work, exceptional talent, professional prestige, expert knowledge and loyalty could not ensure any function for anybody. The personnel department could depose, transfer or simply fire him from one minute to the other, often as a prelude to arrest by the OGPU (as the

Cheka was now called) with which the personnel department had the closest ties.

The situation was so serious in the Ukraine that in April 1925 Kaganovich took over as Secretary General of the Ukrainian Party Central Committee. His task was to reorganise entirely the Ukrainian Party apparatus, to purge it and the government administration of everybody whose loyalty to the "Centre" (that is to Stalin) was not absolutely sure; to get rid of inefficient officials and to complete the "Ukrainisation" process. This campaign, which also had beneficial effects on Khrushchev's career, was inaugurated by a government decree in 1923. It elevated the Ukrainian language to equality with the Russian and made it compulsory for all government and Party officials in the Ukraine to learn the language of that republic in one or two years. During the Ukrainisation campaign many non-Ukrainians lost their positions, thereby providing new openings for people like Khrushchev, who spoke the language fluently, if not perfectly.

It was most important for Khrushchev's later career that he joined the apparatus when it had already become Stalin's monolith. He started practical work at the grass-roots when the practice was already Stalinist. If he was not quite at home yet in the abstract terminology of the ideology, he learnt in practice how the wheels of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" really turn.

The Stalinist power-structure was not difficult to understand for people who knew no other kind of party or state organisation. While for brilliant intellectuals, like Bukharin, the reality of the Lenin-Stalin system was long hidden by the smoke-screen of Marxist terminology, simple people, trained from scratch by the Party, were quick to see how the land lay.

The Soviets are the "transmission belts", the tools for executing the Party's will. On all levels the Party directs and controls the work of the government and its entire mechanism. The Party itself is governed by "the centre". The Party members elect the congress-delegates designated by the centre. These in turn "elect" the Central Committee, that is, they unanimously approve the official list of Central Committee candidates. The Central Committee then appoints the Politbureau. This supreme organ is directed and controlled by the Secretary General.

In less than a year Kaganovich trained the Party secretaries in the Ukraine in the Stalinist method of Party work. A Party secretary must first of all learn to work with his committee which must decide all matters "collectively" according to the Party line transmitted by the secretary. It is the same with municipal or factory committees whether on Party or only on "governmental" level. It is the secretary's task to prepare the agenda, formulate the problems for discussion, add the local angle, prepare the documentary material and—last, but not least—to direct the discussion in such a way that all the committees and meetings should unanimously decide what has already been ordered from above. In the municipal body or the Party organisation of an industrial plant, he has to discuss beforehand with the chairman or secretary of the municipal body (probably himself a disciplined Communist) the plan for the meeting. Here, too, everything has to be decided beforehand. The secretary has to conduct a series of private talks to prepare the script of the meeting. Should there be speeches or remarks not arranged beforehand, it does not matter as long as they are in line with the order from above.

After such preparations, the committee work starts. The Party secretary has his say and listens patiently to the "discussion". The committee members selected by him speak in the pre-arranged order and say what he has told them to say. The secretary works on his notes, his attention only half turned on. If—as it frequently happened before the great purges—an "out-of-line" phrase is uttered or a committee member voices an independent opinion or even speaks against the proposal, the secretary nods to one of his confidants who promptly attacks the out-of-script contribution to the "discussion". The "erring comrade" must be convinced of his mistakes and must be persuaded into unanimity. The discussion drags on. The Party secretary intervenes from time to time, introduces further facts, gives the word to loyal members and does not see the raised hand of the out-of-line ones. If at the end, the meeting is unanimous, he has accomplished his task well; if the order from above has been carried by majority vote only, he is worried. The difficult member must be dealt with somehow—if possible by a heart-to-heart talk, if not by subtle or not so subtle intimidation, or by sending him to some other,

lesser post. Or by a hint to the secret police. The committee must be constantly purged of insufficiently obedient, too independently minded or too ambitious people.

And although the discussion is often boring, the issues are vital and immediate. In the Petrovo-Marinsky district of Stalino there are several factories. There are on occasion strikes. The workers complain about the low wages. The machinery is outdated, there are breakdowns in production. It is the duty of the Party committee to create order in the factories and to ensure smooth production. And there are, not only among the workers, but also among the committee members *bourgeois trade unionists*, backward people who present and approve of "non-proletarian and greedy demands". One sends propagandists to the factories who patiently explain to the workers that striking, demanding higher wages and other bourgeois trade-unionist activities are not worthy of Communist workers. The agitators are armed with a string of quotations:

There can be no question of trade union opposition to the institutions of the Soviet State. Such opposition is a deviation from Marxism to bourgeois trade unionism (Ninth Party Congress, 1920).

The resort to strikes in a country with a proletarian government can be described only as a bureaucratic assault on the proletarian government and as a survival of the capitalist past and institutions on the one hand, and as showing the lack of political development and the cultural backwardness of the toilers (Eleventh Party Congress, 1922).

But the workers answer the quotations with angry roars: "Take back your quotations to . . . We can't feed our children with quotations."

"But Comrades," the agitator pleads, "the factories are your own. You work for yourselves!"

"Then why don't we give ourselves better pay?"

The propagandists come back to report. The committee discusses it. Some of the committee members get confused. They are or were workers themselves. They do not agree easily that to demand a wage increase when prices are going up is "non-proletarian, greedy behaviour" and that it shows that one is under the influence of the capitalist past.

Then there are old revolutionaries who are sticklers for

ideology. If the slogan is now, in 1925, "socialism in one country", meaning that socialism can be established and made to flourish in the Soviet Union alone, without having to wait for revolutions in other countries, then these sticklers remember something. In 1924 Stalin himself wrote:

The principal task of socialism—the organisation of socialist production—has . . . to be fulfilled. Can this task be fulfilled, *can the final victory of socialism be achieved in one country, without the joint efforts of the proletariats of several advanced countries?* No, it cannot. To overthrow the bourgeoisie the efforts of one country are sufficient. . . . For the final victory of socialism, for the organisation of socialist production, the *efforts of one country, particularly of a peasant country, like Russia, are insufficient*; for that, the efforts of the proletariats of several advanced countries are required. (Emphasis added.)

The stickler reads this from a pamphlet by Stalin entitled *The Foundations of Leninism*, published in 1924 as required reading for the Party faithful. True enough, it was soon withdrawn from circulation. Stalin became overnight a firm adherent of "revolution in one country" and Trotsky who in his theory of "permanent revolution" argued in the same manner as Stalin in the withdrawn pamphlet, must now be attacked for it. The Party secretary, instead of committing himself, reads a passage from a new Party pamphlet on the possibility of organising victory on the industrial front and promptly goes over to the next point in the agenda. The old stickler is transferred to other work. He will not trouble any committee any longer.

As the Stalinist method gets perfected, much of the work is done outside of committees and meetings, although Party resolutions and government actions must be formally passed by them.

The Party secretary is an apparatchik and a *Komitetchik* (committee-man). He spends the majority of his working hours in public-speaking on committees, attending informal or highly confidential discussions. The level of his frankness is adapted to the various occasions. Much of the Party work is conspiratorial. Although in higher committees or in confidential *en-deux* discussions between apparatchiki the order from above is referred to as such, in lesser committees and in-front of rank and

file Party members a careful lip-service must be paid to "democratic centralism", to persuasion, to genuine voting. In the city or county Party organisation, the functionaries mix conspiratorial (that is: frank) statements with the ceremonial repetition of Party slogans. The nearer one works to "the masses" the more one has to keep to the ceremonial repetition of the phrases of "democratic centralism". It must never be betrayed in public that all these committees and discussions are, after all, nothing but long, tedious and superfluous ceremonial sanctionings of orders received from above.

The Party secretary and most members of the apparatus spend anything from six to twelve hours a day in committees, at meetings, delivering public speeches or having conspiratorial discussions. All this in addition to their paper work, and their manifold other duties. On an average day they repeat and listen for many hours to the repetitions of the current "agit-prop" material, some of it contained in yesterday's or today's *Pravda* and *Pravda Ukrainy*.

It is easy to imagine the effect of this kind of life on the apparatchiki. For years and decades they spend the greater part of their days at conspiratorial, half-conspiratorial and "façade-meetings". The droning of voices in the committees goes on eternally, slogans and quotations are repeated ad nauseam. In the first years all this is difficult to take. After five years or so, committee work becomes a habit. One does one's paper work while the voices are droning on, with divided attention. That's the way things are done, and that is that.

"Discussion" acquires a further meaning. For the rank-and-file Party members it means the full appreciation of the correctness and wisdom of the party line. For the apparatchik it is *the ceremonial façade for the fulfilment of orders from above*. It is pretending to decide by democratic procedure things which had already been decided. No wonder that Western statesmen are puzzled by the way their "discussion" goes with Soviet leaders.

For an apparatchik like Khrushchev, it is difficult not to change his attitude towards "the masses" and even towards the rank-and-file members of the Party. To neither of them can or does the apparatchik talk in a frank, adult language, calling a spade a spade. One pretends to them, one manipulates them.

The "masses", the "people" become an abstract category. They are beloved, they are important, everything happens for them, they have the ultimate power—but *in reality* one deals with them as with children. They must not be told the facts of life, i.e. the facts of dictatorship. Members of the "masses" or the "people" cease to be even abstractly beloved and respected if they deviate in the least degree from perfect admiration for and obedience to the Party. Then they become waverers, deviators, enemies.

But the apparatchik cannot help changing his attitude to the sacred dogma of Marxism-Leninism either. The endless ceremonial repetition of quotations makes them boring, even devoid of meaning. When the line changes, a given set of quotations "loses actuality", is "not applicable within the present concrete situation". To go on repeating them is as dangerous and punishable a deviation as to emphasise some other principles or quotations which are not prescribed by the centre for current usage. In actual fact, the apparatchik knows perfectly well that only Stalin can decide which view is Marxist or proletarian and which not. Not even Central Committee or Politbureau members have a right to "independent Marxism". The apparatchik cannot help developing mixed feelings towards ideology, in which respect is mixed with cynicism.

The *raion* secretary for instance has to lead his committee "collectively", as Stalin leads the entire Party.

Nearly two years after Lenin's death the slogan was still "collective leadership". Stalin told the Fourteenth Party Congress in December 1925:

... to lead the Party other than collectively is impossible . . . Now that Ilyich (Lenin) is not with us, it is silly to dream of such a thing; it is silly to talk about it. Collective work, collective leadership, unity in the Party, unity in the organs of the Central Committee . . . that is what we need now.

The collective leadership at the top consisted of the seven members of the Politbureau, seven great Bolshevik leaders: *Trotsky*, the great war leader; *Bukharin*, the brilliant theoretician; *Zinoviev*, the leader of the Communist International; *Rykov*, who became Premier after Lenin died; *Kamenev*, leader of the Moscow Bolsheviks; *Tomsky*, the chief of the Trade

Unions; and Secretary General *Stalin*, head of the Party apparatus.

For the apparatchiki it was clear that the General Secretary must direct the collective leadership. They knew that "disunity" is treason, and that by disagreeing with the General Secretary people endanger unity. The entire Party learnt in these years that a glorious revolutionary record, a tremendous Bolshevik prestige and even great popularity could not help one if he had committed crimes against unity by disagreeing with the Party, that is with the General Secretary.

The apparatchiki knew the real power situation, and that none of the other great leaders could win against Stalin, who was at the helm of the apparatus. Every Party member has to obey the Personnel Department, the Orgbureau and the Control Commission. Rykov was Premier, Tomsy leader of the Trade Unions, Trotsky Commissar of War or Communications, because "the Party" put them in their places. Zinoviev was Leningrad Party secretary and Kamenev led Moscow, because "the Party" wanted it that way. They could all lose their positions overnight if they turned against "the Party", which was directed by the Secretary General. Every human being in the Soviet Union was ultimately under Stalin's orders. Stalin's power and authority could, in principle, be withdrawn by a unanimous vote of the Politbureau, but as the great leaders belonged to different factions, they were incapable of joint action.

Trotsky, the great war leader and brilliant orator was not an apparatchik. He could only write books and pamphlets, make fiery speeches—full of the spirit of the revolution. But the people, the Party members, were tired of revolutionary fervour, they did not want to take part in new fights. They were apathetic, yearning for quiet, peaceful, "normal" times.

Trotsky, Bukharin, Tomsy and the others, were men of Marxist principles. They were great in opposition, during the revolutionary upheavals and during the desperate fight to establish a Communist régime. But they were no peace-time politicians, did not understand the intricacies of the apparatus and were not good at personal intrigues.

It was no surprise for the apparatchiki, that these leaders were soon, one by one, deposed from their functions, expelled

from the Politbureau, from the Central Committee and later even from the Party. Some of them publicly recanted their oppositionary views, but this did not save them from banishment. The language used against them was most violent. At the Fifteenth Party Congress Kamenev spoke for the opposition. Stalin reprimanded him in the following words:

"Kamenev's speech is the most lying, pharisaical, scoundrelly and roguish of all the opposition speeches that have been made from this platform."

The six great men of the Politbureau, the six co-architects of the revolution, were branded as saboteurs, revilers of the proletariat, helpers of the class-enemy, enemies of the Soviet rule. The invectives grew grosser as the months passed. They were not yet arrested, but hundreds of their lesser followers were under arrest or had been banished to Siberia. As various leaders were expelled, waves of fear went over the Party. "Imagine"—people would say—"what can happen to lesser people if even a Trotsky or a Kamenev is treated in such a way. . . . It all shows how careful one must be."

It is of course a mistake to suppose that a precinct, city, or county-committee is less dangerous a place than the Cent. Com. or the Politbureau at the top. The purges—as yet bloodless—were severe at all levels. Witness the abrupt way Kvirring, the Ukrainian Party Chief, was fired to make place for Kaganovich! On all levels a great deal of skill and prudence was required, ready wit and the art of political feint and counterfeint to execute the changing Party line without a hitch and to manage to belong to the right set in the apparatus.

Once one steps on to even the lowest rung of the hierarchical ladder of the apparatus, it is exceedingly dangerous to stop. As in the feudal hierarchy, one's fate is closely linked to one's immediate superior's or sponsor's, who in turn is dependent on his superior and sponsor and so on up the ladder to the summit.

One has to be lucky. If one's promotion to some higher post had been signed by a functionary who had later lost Party favour, it did not count that one had had no personal contact with him. Some people lost their posts or even their lives because some Party boss signed their promotion a day or two before he was arrested by the OGPU as an anti-Party class enemy. Again it was immaterial that the promotion was signed

in the ordinary course of bureaucratic work on instructions from the centre.

One has to be lucky. If the Party starts a new campaign and one is chosen to introduce and propagandise it, too much or too little enthusiasm in doing so might be equally fatal. Let us take for instance the fight against the rich peasants, the kulaks. In 1925 the Party, Stalin himself, decided that one should not be too harsh on the prosperous farmers. Since the small farmers produced barely enough for their own needs, the towns and cities could hope to get food only from the larger farmers, so they should not be persecuted. Only the "left-oppositionists", the Trotsky-Zinoviev-Kamenev group wanted "class-war in the villages". Stalin and his allies in the Politbureau, Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky, denounced this "left-deviation". Stalin told off the Sverdlovsk students for demanding class-war against the rich peasants—a "most inappropriate, incorrect slogan". Even in 1928 when the First Five Years Plan was announced, only twenty per cent of all farms were planned to be collectivised by 1933. Yet by late 1929 there was already a class struggle for collectivisation, and against the kulaks. If one had shown oneself too enthusiastic, too effective propagator of the 1925 and 1926 line, one was liable to get into most serious trouble in 1929.

It was the same with industrialisation. In 1926 Stalin was the Politbureau's most sarcastic critic of the "super-industrialisators" like Trotsky and Zinoviev, and ridiculed the proposition to build a great hydro-electric power station on the Dnieper. Three years later to oppose the breakneck speed of industrialisation was simply suicide.

While these twists and turns in the Party line expressed the struggle for power or for survival within the top leadership, there was a desperate rearguard fight within the Party and the trade unions against the dictatorship of the apparatus. The trouble was that the Communist officials and lesser Party members who now shared the same misgivings as Lenin had on his deathbed about the monstrous monolith of the apparatus were captives, like Lenin, of their dictatorship ideology. They fought desperately and often very courageously against the terrorism of the apparatus—within the apparatus.

They succeeded in uniting entire Party organisations, like

that of the city of Leningrad, behind the demands of the opposition, but they were afraid of a Party split and would have abhorred the thought of joining cause with the non-Communist workers and peasants. They fought against the *dictatorship of the apparatus over the Party*, while loudly asserting their adherence to the *dictatorship of the Party over the country*. When on the 1927 anniversary of the revolution, the Party opposition had a separate procession in addition to the main procession organised by Stalin's apparatus, the people of Moscow looked on. The opposition did not ask for their help.

The rebellious Communist university students did not demand free speech for the entire country and for all parties, they wanted it only for themselves. The trade union leaders wanted freedom of discussion for *Communist* trade unionists, not for all the workers.

They denounced the OGPU terrorism only in so far as it was directed against Communists, not against the Russian people.

To the majority of the apparatchiki, the opposition at the top looked very much like the opposition in their midst. A Party secretary at the grass roots, like Khrushchev, knew very well that if Stalin lost his battle at the top, then all the other secretaries throughout the apparatus might lose their own battles against their own oppositionists, waverers and trouble-makers. They, the technicians and executives of dictatorship, were by their very function against all curtailing of dictatorship. (Which goes to show that Marx was perhaps right: It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness. . . .) They took good care not to get too involved in theoretical squabbles, concentrating instead rather on being good administrators and efficient organisers.

For two years Khrushchev went on working almost unnoticed in the Petrovo-Marinsky district of the city of Stalino. As Party secretary, he controlled the factories in his district. He was ultimately responsible not only for all Party work in his district, but also for all industrial production. Although a good and effective public orator, he relied mainly on organisational and administrative efficiency. He wanted to have "good men" in all control posts under him. His organising talents were

recognised and he was taken over by the Stalino Party Headquarters as super controller of the organisational and personnel activities of the local Party committees. In November 1927 at the Tenth Congress of the Ukrainian CP, his superiors permitted him to move the adoption of certain organisational and administrative proposals in the formulation of which he was probably concerned:

While combating the opposition, we should not forget about *practical matters of Party organisation . . .* I propose that, in major industrial centres and districts, secretariats of District Committees be created. Some people might argue that the creation of such secretariats would remove certain matters from the jurisdiction of the District Party Committee and thus *encroach on democracy*. However, I believe that, far from violating the basic principle of Party democracy, the creation of secretariats would take away from the District Committee petty secondary matters they now handle, and enable them to focus their attention on basic questions. (Italics added.)

In frank, conspiratorial language: let us have in major industrial centres and regions district secretariats which can promptly and directly carry out orders from above without a lot of cumbersome ceremonial discussions. The "petty secondary matters" in personnel work—replacing people, handing them over to the OGPU—should be done swiftly, secretly. The practical objective here is: *smoother exercise of the dictatorship of the apparatus*.

According to the method and custom in the Party, Kaganovich appointed him to make these proposals because he was entrusted with their experimental realisation. His role in the Congress had demonstrated that he was a useful cog-on-the-wheel in the mechanism of dictatorship. He was given his chance to excel, but until he produced results he remained a third-ranker. He was not nominated by the Party in November 1927 to become one of the hundred and twenty members of the Ukrainian Party Central Committee.

Stalino was the centre of one of the most important regions of the Donbass industrial and mining complex. And the "practical matters of Party organisation" were just then most important. In January 1928 famine again threatened the country. Stalin announced that the government had received two

million tons less grain than the minimum necessary to feed the urban population. Emergency measures were ordered. Party activists were sent out from the towns and the cities to help the OGPU in requisitioning, in finding hidden granaries, and in punishing the "rural saboteurs". Khrushchev, as chief of personnel, had to find the trusted Party activists who were fit for this kind of work. He had to eliminate those who because of "petty bourgeois sentimentality" or because of their "kulak soul" could not take part in the terroristic drive against the peasants. Many Communist workers were arrested in this period because they refused to be willing tools of the OGPU and tried in the name of Communist morality to stop the outrages against the village population. Some functionaries higher up in the apparatus earned the displeasure of the secret police during these drives. If the OGPU could not punish them at once, they had their revenge later during the various purges. Khrushchev evidently did not fail in this respect, because both Kaganovich, the supreme boss of the Ukraine, and the OGPU were satisfied with him.

Later Stalin himself wrote (*Leninism*, p. 129) that the grain requisitioning drive entailed "administrative arbitrariness, violation of revolutionary law, raids on peasant houses". These are understatements. Whole villages were sentenced to starvation when the government took away all the grain, all the food they had. Peasants were beaten up, arrested, sent to labour camps. The great army of the vagrant children, the *bezprizhorny*, were swelled by thousands of the newly orphaned. These children roamed the cities, begging, stealing, dying of starvation by the thousands. It required stout hearts indeed to go on with the emergency measures. In the spring and early summer of 1928 the Kremlin ordered a new purge directed solely against the Party functionaries who wavered in executing the extremely harsh emergency measures. It was one of Khrushchev's tasks to conduct this purge in his own region.

In December 1927 and in early 1928 he took part in several most secret conferences at the Ukrainian Party headquarters. Kaganovich instructed a selected set of functionaries, mainly organisation and personnel department officials, in a new Party drive. He informed them that wreckers and saboteurs were at work in the Donbass, mismanaging the mines in order

to reduce the output of coal, spoiling machinery and ventilation apparatus, causing roof-falls, explosions, various mine-disasters and setting fire to pits, plants and power stations. These wreckers were also deliberately obstructing the improvement of workers' conditions and infringing the Soviet labour protection laws.

In frank, conspiratorial language (not used on this occasion by Kaganovich), the outdated machinery, the forced tempo of work, the lack of safety precautions caused too many breakdowns and mining disasters. The workers, dissatisfied with the low wages and unsanitary conditions, were in dangerous mood because they could not get their bread-rations. The famine hit them hardest. In order to find scapegoats for the grave situation in the mining industry and for the very low living standards, Stalin, Kaganovich and the OGPU chiefs planned the first great show trial, where a series of "bourgeois experts", their agents and henchmen confessed that they had organised the "wrecking". In short, the first rigged show-trial was planned, the trial of the Shakty saboteurs. Later they duly confessed that they were "closely connected with the former mine-owners, Russian and foreign capitalists, and with foreign military espionage services". Their aim, of course, was "to disrupt the development of socialist industry".

The new district secretariats and the controllers of the personnel departments had to help the OGPU in preparing this trial and in the new "vigilance-drive" against bourgeois experts and saboteurs and wreckers generally. The personnel files had to be studied to find workers and engineers whose class-origins were not quite pure, or who could be suspected of having had connections with capitalists or their "lackeys" in the past.

This was a great test for the entire Party apparatus, but especially for the Donbass apparatchiki, like Khrushchev.

The Shakty trial and the general purge of the wreckers gave a good pretext for purging and arresting those workers who were too vocal in protesting against the low wages. A steady flow of victims went before the OGPU firing squads and to Siberia. A legal circular of 1929 which did not quote executions, stated that on December 1, 1928, the total number of people "deprived of their liberty" was 113,500. The number awaiting sentences was not given.

Kaganovich was called to Moscow in 1928, to replace the purged Moscow secretary Uglanov. Before leaving he discussed with his successor in the Ukrainian Party secretaryship, Stanislas Kossior, the state of the Ukrainian Party apparatus. He must have given a good report of Khrushchev's abilities and loyalty, because soon after Kaganovich's departure, Khrushchev was transferred to a higher post in the Kiev City Party organisation, where he became a member of the secretariat of the Party Committee. Evidently he had stood the test of the "emergency measures" and purge-preparation period and ably realised his proposals at the 1927 Congress.

Kiev, equally important with Kharkov, was a significant Party post. Khrushchev's transfer just preceded the start of a new and very intensive purge. The Party was again fighting against a new set of renegades, freshly discovered Trotskyites, and already also against "rightists", that is against the adherents of the Bukharin-life (softer treatment of peasants). Bukharin was not as yet attacked, but the purge against his followers and those who simply doubted the efficiency of terrorising the peasants, prepared the way for an all-out attack against Bukharin himself. The fight against these oppositionists resulted in the expulsion and arrest of hundreds of functionaries and thousands of Party members. Khrushchev was one among the scores of lesser Party functionaries who were congratulated for "their resolute fight against the oppositionists".

At the Eleventh Ukrainian Party Congress Khrushchev was one of the delegates of the Kiev Party Committee. He was permitted to make a long speech on the third day of the Congress. After enthusiastically praising the decision to purge the Party of rightists and of all those who failed in the emergency measures drive, he came to his favourite organisational matters:

... Speaking of the need to fight the rightists, we omit at times the vital questions whose solution helps the Party to manage basic difficulties as well as overcome hesitations and vacillations displayed by some unstable members of the Party. I believe that what we need now is to organise our work more effectively, to test everyone as to whether he manages his work correctly, to secure a correct handling of affairs, and thus to help the Party in overcoming all the difficulties as well as in fighting the rightist deviation which stems from such difficulties.

In frank, conspiratorial language: the issues are not ideological, political or moral. Rank-and-file members turn against the authority on the top if the political and economic administration commits mistakes, or fails to detect and deal promptly with signs of dissatisfaction at the earliest possible stage.

This was Khrushchev's last important speech for some time in the Ukraine. He soon received a most curious double promotion.

1929 was the "year of the great change", the year when Stalin emerged publicly as the dictator of the country. In January he succeeded in expelling Trotsky from the Soviet Union, and soon afterwards he was able to depose from the leadership his erstwhile ally, Bukharin. The Politbureau was now purged of all those who were members at the time of Lenin's death. And so Stalin became officially "the Lenin of today".

One of the original Stalinists was Kaganovich, Khrushchev's sponsor. For the last two years Khrushchev had been regarded in the Ukrainian Party apparatus as a Kaganovich-man. In Stalino and in Kiev he was one of Kaganovich's most efficient lieutenants in administering the purges against the left and right deviationists, against all those whom the centre selected for that role. In his capacity as "personnel and organisational expert", he worked constantly with the OGPU. By this time the secret police was not only policing the Party through its liaison officers, indirectly through the control commissions and the personnel departments, but was bureaucratically controlling all Party assignments and promotions. No assignment or promotion could be initiated without a previous blessing from the appropriate department of the OGPU. Kaganovich, who was by that time again directing personnel work in Moscow and belonged to the closest personal entourage of Stalin, was of course also in daily contact with the OGPU.

A "leading Party official", as Khrushchev now was in Kiev, had several telephones on his desk. Besides the ordinary one, he had a direct line connecting the Kiev office with Ukrainian Party headquarters in Kharkov, and of course a direct line to the Kiev OGPU. His work in "fighting the oppositionists" was valued not only by his superiors in the apparatus and by Kaganovich himself, but also by the OGPU network. Because

in the year of the great change he received his transfer to Moscow. When the Party decided to train trusted Communist officials "for leading work in industry", Khrushchev was not only selected to become a student at the J. V. Stalin Industrial Academy in Moscow but was also "elected" secretary of the Academy's Party Committee. We have no documentary evidence to explain the reasons for this appointment. But our knowledge of the Party structure and the method of appointments then employed leaves no doubt that Kaganovich had by now given Stalin a favourable report on his protégé, and that neither the OGPU in its normal bureaucratic procedure nor Stalin's *private* secret police network, had anything against his appointment. The hypothesis that Khrushchev was at that time nominated by the OGPU and not by Kaganovich, although not impossible, cannot be verified. It is true that his student's career was rather short. He spent less than a year and a half at the Academy and in January 1931 he went back to the Party apparatus. Was his task only to be a Party watchdog over the Academy students gathered from all parts of the country? Was his mission only to set up a proper Stalinist Party apparatus in the Academy and gather a precise cadre file on the students and professors of the Academy? This is quite likely, because when he rather abruptly ended his career as a student he was not reprimanded, like other students who failed in their studies, but was given an important post in the apparatus. He became secretary of the Baumann *raion* Party Committee in Moscow, a quite important member of the Moscow apparatus, then headed by Kaganovich.

IV

THE "STALIN-MAN"

"In 1932-4 N. S. Khrushchev worked at first as second, and then as first secretary of the Moscow city and as the second secretary of the Moscow oblast committees of the Party; in 1935 he was elected first secretary of the Moscow oblast and city committees of the Party where he worked until 1938. In these years N. S. Khrushchev carried out organisational work of great magnitude in executing the plans projected by the Party and government for the socialist reconstruction of Moscow, for developing public services in the capital, for the improvement of the living conditions of workers and employees. . . .

From 1934 N. S. Khrushchev was a member of the Central Committee of the Party."

(Large Soviet Encyclopedia, Vol. 46, 1957)

DURING the years that Khrushchev worked at the Industrial Academy in Moscow and in the Moscow Party apparatus, till his arrival in the top regions of Soviet power in 1934—untold millions of peasants and workers were plunged into greater misery than they had suffered during the years of the civil war.

In 1929 Stalin ordered the "liquidation of kulaks as a class". He was forced to do so by the dictatorship of reality. The resistance of the peasantry had by then attained such measures that it not only threatened the urban centres with ever greater famine, but consequently also menaced the future of the entire Bolshevik experiment. In 1928 Stalin had called the idea of expropriating the kulaks "folly". In the spring of 1929 he was still insisting that individual farming would "continue to play a predominant part in supplying the country with food and raw materials". In the First Five Years Plan he envisaged only twenty per cent collectivisation. But the continued resistance of the kulaks forced him to give sterner directions to his apparatus which started to roll with accelerated tempo and crushed the two million prosperous farmer families of the Soviet Union.

With the attack against the prosperous and middle farmers,

the resistance of the villages turned into a civil war. The Party detachments sent out to the villages to force the poor and middle peasants into collectives and to expropriate the kulaks, met with such desperate resistance, that villages had to be attacked with machine guns, bombed from the air, burned to the ground. Peasant revolts embraced whole counties and groups of counties. Red Army artillery units had to help the GPU troops. Entire districts were "emptied"; all stocks of grain, all food, all animals and tools were confiscated. The emptied districts were then sealed off by the army and the GPU. The inhabitants, unable to escape, all starved to death.

Cattle trucks were carting away peasant families to Siberia and to the Arctic regions of the country. Towns were flooded with bewildered, emaciated peasants. Hundreds of thousands of orphaned children roamed the country.

Stalin later told Churchill, that the majority of ten million peasant households were liquidated during this period.

The peasantry also waged total war. In many districts the crops were set on fire, cattle, horses, sheep and pigs slaughtered, farming implements smashed. The scorched earth defence of the peasantry had fatal results. Stalin revealed in January 1934 that whereas the Soviet Union in 1929 possessed 30.4 million head of cattle, in 1933 it had only 19.5 million head. More than ten million head was slaughtered. Of the 34 million horses in 1929, only 16.6 million remained by 1933. Nearly two-thirds of all pigs, sheep and goats were also slaughtered. Huge tracts of the best agricultural land were left untilled. Hundreds of thousands of peasant houses were burnt down.

The millions of peasants in the forced labour camps worked side-by-side with hundreds of thousands of industrial workers, thereby fulfilling the Bolshevik dream of worker-peasant alliance.

On the industrial workers fell the full impact of the rural civil war. For years they had had to ward off hunger. Now the threat of starvation became even greater. But soon after the beginning of the all-out attack against the peasantry, forced industrialisation started. The workers were driven on by threats, intimidation and by a new set of anti-labour laws to work more for less wages. At the end of 1929 Stalin announced the "end of spontaneity" in labour relations and the beginning

of direction of labour. Tens of thousands of people were sent off to "battle on the steel- or coal-fronts". New iron and coal-mining districts were opened up in the Urals and Siberia, huge new steel combines were constructed. Construction and planning came first, the housing of workers last. Grumblers, waverers, absentees and those who tried to escape from their place of work, were dealt with by the GPU and, if not executed, swelled the ranks of the forced labour armies.

The "egalitarians" had been beaten long ago. At the beginning, under Lenin, no Party official was to get more pay than the wages of a first-class skilled worker. Now the tendency was to give the Communist officials, whether working in the Party, in the government or as directors and managers of "industrial or economic units", special wages, special rations, special privileges. The unskilled workers meanwhile got less and less. Tomsky, later eliminated in a purge, complained at the Seventh Soviet Trade Union Congress in 1928 that "the difference between the pay of skilled and unskilled workers is of such a colossal magnitude as does not exist in Western Europe".

The new class of Party leaders and managers, while earning anything from five to thirty times as much as a skilled worker, fought against "bourgeois egalitarianism". Stalin said:

These people hark that socialism means equality. . . . They are petty-bourgeois views of our left-wing scatterbrains.

It is from this period that we have one of the few glimpses of Stalin's private affairs. Stalin was fifty-two years old in 1932, the year of the greatest famine, of the growing terror and ever-waxing Stalin-cult. Huge pictures of Stalin covered entire walls all over the country. Photographs, statues of him were everywhere, like the hatred of him in people's hearts. His young second wife, Nadezhda Alliluyeva, an idealist Communist, daughter of an old revolutionary, could stand it no longer.

On November 8, 1932, the Stalins with most members of the Politbureau went to a party given by Voroshilov. At this party Nadezhda Stalin, who was assailed by fits of melancholy, broke her silence and in front of the whole company "spoke up for Russia", against the arbitrary famine, against the mounting terrorism, against the tragedy of it all.

Stalin made a scene. He rebuffed his wife in the most vulgar, uncouth language, Nadezhda left the house at once. Stalin stayed behind to discuss policy. It was given out later that when he returned home, he found Nadezhda dead in her bed. According to this version she had gone to bed, pulled a blanket over herself and shot herself in the heart.

It required indeed a great deal of blind fanaticism, a very stout heart, or the utmost human indifference to work in these times in the upper regions of Stalin's apparatus. This was the period of many suicides among the apparatchiki. Thousands were executed because they could take no further part in the cruel war against the people. There was of course no other choice: one either had to go on working or die by suicide or execution.

A few months before his thirty-seventh birthday in January 1931, Khrushchev became one of the ten new Moscow district secretaries. As such, he was member of the Moscow Oblast and Moscow City Party Committees, of which *Stalin, Kaganovich and other top leaders* were also members. He was on the threshold of power.

A year later, on January 31, 1932, *Pravda* reported Khrushchev's next promotion. He became second secretary of Moscow City, that is Kaganovich's deputy and obvious successor. The other nine district secretaries appointed with him in the previous year, disappeared one by one, either through the purges or by a series of demotions, to insignificant, non-political positions.

This is sufficient evidence that during these twelve months Khrushchev had stood a further test and fully earned Stalin's approval, that in fact, he became a "Stalin-man".

The importance of the Moscow Party organisation is obvious. Moscow, "the stronghold of Bolshevism", was directed by Kaganovich, at that time Number Two after Stalin in the Soviet hierarchy. The Moscow City and Oblast apparatchiki outranked in real influence and power their opposite numbers in similar Party organisations, because they worked directly under Stalin's eye and all their actions were obviously backed directly by Stalin. For the very same reason the Moscow City and Oblast (the huge Moscow region, larger than many

European countries) Party Committees were the most dangerous places to work in. Having to work directly under Stalin's eye, watched constantly by the GPU Centre and by Stalin's private and separate secret police network, these committees had the highest mortality and purge rate. Seventy per cent of the Moscow committee members were, for instance, purged in the 1932-4 period—before the great purges started in 1934.

Khrushchev worked only for a few months in the Baumann district in 1931. Soon he was transferred to the Krasnopresensky district which was even more industrialised. As Party secretary his task was to inspect, control and prod the factories of his district, to oversee not only the building and modernisation work going on, but also to check up on the district government. In addition to supervising economic, industrial and municipal activities, his Committee controlled nearly two hundred primary Party organisations, Party cells, factory, school, office committees, etc. The cadre-files of the personnel department had to be studied very frequently during these periods, because of purges, promotions, transfers. He had to sit with his own Committee, take part in the Moscow City and Oblast Committee meetings, report for instructions to the Moscow secretariat, make the usual round of speeches, never less than two a week, and often ten or more. It meant ten, twelve and even fourteen or sixteen hours' work a day.

Decisions on questions of personnel were difficult and dangerous. It was equally dangerous to make enemies as friends. To sponsor someone who might commit a grave mistake or be subsequently exposed (or appointed) as an enemy of the Party, was a fatal step, just as fatal as purging some insignificant smaller functionary who turned out to be a man of connections.

One has to be alert and able to fathom future changes and purges from the slightest signs. If Kaganovich speaks about a functionary without calling him a "comrade", it might be just a slip of the tongue. But it might also be the first sign of displeasure. If another functionary is missing for two or three days from his office, without explanation, it might be that he has been arrested by the GPU, or he might have been sent on a very secret mission. In the first case, one ought to start something against persons sponsored by the missing functionary,

in the second, he might soon become an important person.

One also has to learn the real Party ranks beneath the official ranks. An insignificant clerk in Stalin's secretariat may be just what he appears to be, but he might also be training for some important future post, or he might even be a member of Stalin's *secret* secret police.

Then there are the problems of his own Party standing. An exposed apparatchik, as Khrushchev already was, knows very well how lesser Party people are judged on the basis of their cadre-files kept in the personnel department (with copies at the Centre *and* at the GPU). On the whole, colourless individuals have a greater chance for survival. Lenin once complained:

If you purge all the insufficiently obedient but intelligent people and are left with none but the obedient, will you not surely destroy the Party?

True, the Party under Stalin is in a way a "mediocracy", there are so many mediocre people in it. But some of the mediocrity is self-imposed. It is pretended. One has to be able and intelligent, but not extremely so. One's originality, intelligence, wit should not be too obvious. It should not endanger one's prestige as a blindly obedient servant of the Party.

For years now Khrushchev has been working on building up his "Party personality".

A Party functionary in the Stalin days must be generally inconspicuous, a man without too vivid personal traits. He must be stable, steady, smooth. Should the ever watchful Party notice that at times he was prompted by sudden ideas, whims, spontaneous inspirations, should there be any doubt that he is not a disciplined cog in the machine, should he show signs of having a will-power of his own—he is out.

One must appear as a fanatical (but not *too* fanatical), and also prudent apparatchik. The ever-watchful Party should also know that he can make a fanatical impression on the masses, when that is necessary, that on the rare occasions when he is expected to be a jolly good fellow, he can be that too.

The Party dislikes too popular people, too brilliant people, too ebullient people. The Party distrusts sulking, morose, dissatisfied people. The good apparatchik must display a synthetic proletarian serenity. He must be quiet and unruffled.

If before becoming an apparatchik he was, like Khrushchev, a man of high spirits, full of mischief and laughter, of strong emotions, of over-bubbling, imprudent, improvising personality—all that must be suppressed. On the rare occasions when it is in the Party's interest (and not too dangerous for himself) to appear as a roaring, ebullient peasant, he can switch on his old and now mostly suppressed personality. But on these occasions, when he permits himself the brief luxury of "being himself", he feels as if he were acting. Being yourself is in a way, showmanship. Of course, ever since 1922, ten years ago, when he joined the *Rabfak* and came under the Party's eye, he has very rarely indulged in being his "real self". For ten years his temperament, his habits of speech, his sudden bursts of anger, his crude sense of humour and love of the farcical, have all been suppressed. His old self of ten years ago has not matured with the years. When he switches on his "personality" rarely and for a very short time, that belongs to a ten years younger self. (It will take more than twenty years before, on attaining full power, he can once again give full vent to his personality—the personality of the twenty-eight-year-old ebullient peasant!)

Of course, in speaking and speech-making, in writing and discussing, he uses the same *Pravda* style which everyone else uses in the apparatus. They all speak like Stalin and *Pravda*, of course not permitting themselves various quips Stalin uses.

Khrushchev at this time is father of three children. He has a wife, a family, a motor-car, a flat. But of course an apparatchik cannot have real family ties and cannot have any friends.

He cannot have real family ties because most of his waking minutes are taken up by Party work. Officially, most of his Party work is secret. He cannot share his problems and worries with his wife; not because he does not trust her, but to protect her. In case something went wrong, and the GPU arrested her, it would mean the end of her and of him if she knew any Party secrets. On those rare evenings or holiday lunches when he is with his family, it is good to be cheerful, to bring his real self out of cold storage, to joke, to play, to sing—to cram into those very rare hours some pretence of a happy family circle.

If love is "the basic dissolver of human separateness", then the apparatchik is very lonely indeed. Always in Committees, in discussion meetings, in crowded offices, he is never alone and

always lonely. He has had to discard, or at least put into cold storage, his individuality and personality. He is a lonely, depersonalised being moving in the dangerous jungle of the collective. All his waking hours (and probably many of his dreams) are taken up with the highly complex chess-moves necessary for his physical survival.

Khrushchev has by this time reached a position from which demotion means arrest or death. There is no other way for him but upwards.

From 1932 onwards Stalin wanted an entirely free hand to execute leading Communists. His pretext was a "terrorist attempt" against his life. The "assassination plot" was a memorandum, signed by Ryutin, the former propaganda chief, who suggested to the members of the Central Committee that they should vote Stalin out of office. According to the memorandum Stalin's war on the peasants would lead to general chaos and to the bankruptcy of the Soviet system. The memorandum was supported by such former Stalinists as Syrtsov, Premier of the Russian Soviet Republic, and Lominadze, who helped Stalin to overcome the right and left opposition. Stalin on learning of the "plot", instructed the OGPU to execute them. The OGPU chiefs did not dare however to execute leading Communists without the approval of the Central Committee and its Political Bureau.

Originally the secret police could not arrest Party members without the Party's permission. The usual procedure was that the secret police first had to furnish a great deal of incriminating evidence to the Party. The Party Control Commission investigated these charges and if it found them substantiated, expelled the member in question, who could then be arrested by the secret police. In the case of rank-and-file members, local Party officials gave the Party's permission by quickly seeing to the expulsion of the accused. By the early nineteen thirties it was easy for Stalin and his apparatus to get anyone expelled, save the members of the Central Committee and of the Central Control Commission. According to the Party Statutes (Tenth and Seventeenth Party Congresses) candidates and members of the Central Committee and of the Control Commissions were amply defended against unjust expulsion from the Party. They

enjoyed something similar to the parliamentary immunity of Members of Parliament in the West. According to the Statutes, it was necessary to call a plenary session of the Central Committee with the participation of all candidate members and of all the members of the Central Control Commission. And only a two-thirds majority of this large general assembly could decide the expulsion of one of its members after investigating their case in detail. For the Centcom, Control Commission and Politbureau members this immunity from expulsion was the only safeguard against arbitrary arrest. They were the only people in the Soviet Union who had the right to defend themselves against any accusation.

Although by now all these bodies were peopled mostly by Stalinists, they very naturally insisted on their own safety from arbitrary arrest. So when Stalin submitted to the Politbureau of the Centcom the OGPU request for a free hand against certain Centcom and Control Commission members, the Politbureau declined permission, and Stalin had to turn to the Centcom itself, which also refused to make an exception in the expulsion statutes. Stalin tried again soon, with the same result. His motion was again defeated in both bodies. Both twice defeated Stalin's motion to give the secret police permission to shed the blood of leading Communists. One of Stalin's right hand men and favourites, Sergei Kirov, voted on each occasion against the motion, so did Ordjonikidze, Stalin's chief industrial expert, and Rudsutak, Chairman of the Party's Central Control Commission. Kirov even insisted that after the great victory over the peasants, the terror should be gradually relaxed (thereby probably sealing his fate).

Stalin realised that with the 1932 membership of the Central Committee and Politbureau he could not start to eliminate the oppositionists and waverers, such as Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin and the other leaders. The first step towards a new Central Committee was to purge the Moscow Party organisation which controlled about one-third of the votes of the Central Committee. He had to have an entirely loyal Party organisation in Moscow.

The preparation of a solid political base in the capital was a slow and cumbersome task. Thousands and thousands of small organisational and personal problems had to be solved in order

to cleanse the Moscow organisations thoroughly. Party transfers, demotions by promotions into governmental positions, expulsions from the Party, suborning by intimidation and similar methods had to be applied with great skill and patience.

And to help Kaganovich in this work Khrushchev was picked by Stalin and Kaganovich in 1932. It would be a grave mistake based on an insufficient knowledge of the Stalin dictatorship to suppose that at this time Khrushchev was "in the know". He certainly was not told by Stalin or Kaganovich in plain, conspiratorial language that bloody purges were being prepared.

As Second Secretary of the Moscow City Party Committee, Khrushchev was directing Communist organisational and personnel work in the capital. He controlled directly some five thousand Party functionaries, among them more than sixteen hundred *raion*, cell, factory, office and other Party Secretaries. Conducting the day-to-day executive work under Kaganovich's general supervision (the First Secretary of Moscow had half a dozen other important functions), he received his training for the First Secretaryship.

As Second Secretary and as a member of the Moscow City and Moscow Oblast Party Committees, he doubly outranked his later rivals: Malenkov and Bulganin. Malenkov, eight years younger than Khrushchev, was chief of the organisation department of the Moscow Oblast Party Committee and had the eighteenth and lowest place on its Executive Bureau. Bulganin, one year Khrushchev's junior, was Chairman of the Moscow Soviet, i.e. mayor—a window-dressing job in the Soviet system—and was outranked by Khrushchev in the City and Oblast Executive Bureaus.

He outranked them and, with the exception of Kaganovich, all the Moscow apparatchiki, in an even more important respect. Together with Kaganovich, he supervised the 1932-3 purge of the nearly half a million strong Moscow Party organisation. More than six hundred purge committees were checking up on the secret files and conducting private hearings and purge meetings in the capital. As already mentioned more than seventy per cent of the 1932 Moscow Committee was purged by 1934.

It should be clear that Khrushchev's role in these purges was

an administrative one. He carried out orders from above. The orders were couched in "constitutional Party language", paying lip-service to "socialist legality" and morality.

The purges he organised and supervised were bloodless. They led to expulsion from the Party or demotion to the status of candidate member of the Party. He knew of course that the OGPU was represented on the purge commissions, and that the commission chairmen had instructions to communicate at once the discovery of "criminal", "oppositionist" and "factionist" people to the higher authorities. He also knew that many expulsions were followed by arrest by the OGPU. But he certainly had no power to stop even a single arrest, and any such attempt would have led to his own arrest.

The Party at that time was trying to curb or at least systematise and bureaucratised mass terror. In the Smolensk Archives there was found a secret Instruction signed by Molotov as Premier and by Stalin as Party secretary on May 8, 1933, and addressed to all workers (officials) of the Party and the government, and to all OGPU organs, to all courts and procuracies:

The Central Committee and the Sovnarkom (Premier's office) are informed that disorderly mass arrests in the countryside are still a part of the practice of our officials. Such arrests are made by chairmen of kolkhozes and members of kolkhoz administrations, by chairmen of village soviets and secretaries of Party cells, by raion and krai officials; *arrests are made by all who desire to*, and who, strictly speaking, have no right to make arrests. It is not surprising that in such a *saturnalia of arrests*, organs which have the right to arrest, including the organs of the OGPU and especially the militia (ordinary police), *lose all feeling of moderation* and often perpetrate arrests without any basis, acting according to the rule: 'First arrest, then investigate.' (Emphasis added.)

According to the Stalin-Molotov Instruction, apart from concentration camps, forced labour colonies and similar units, there were 800,000 prisoners in the country. It was ordered that 400,000 of these were to be released or transferred to forced labour camps within two months.

This Instruction was received by all Party functionaries, so Khrushchev naturally read it, and quite certainly hundreds of other instructions and circulars of a similarly revealing nature,

or even worse. If he had any misgivings, he certainly did not betray them in any way, otherwise he would swiftly have joined the ranks of the purged.

By February 1934 he succeeded Kaganovich as First Secretary of Moscow and was elected at the Seventeenth Party Congress full member of the new Central Committee. As such, he was already one of the seventy leaders of the Party. But as First Secretary of Moscow, he outranked dozens of other Central Committee members. It can be safely stated that he was now among the top thirty, if not top twenty-five rulers of the Soviet Union.

Stalin described the Party structure in the following words:

In our Party, if we have in mind its leading strata, there are about three to four thousand first rank leaders whom we could call our Party's General Staff. Then there are thirty to forty thousand middle rank leaders, who are our Party's corps of officers. Then there are about a hundred to a hundred and fifty thousand of the lower rank Party Command Staff, who are so to speak our Party's non-commissioned officers (Stalin's report to the Central Committee Plenum, 1937.)

As recently as November 1927 Khrushchev had not yet been elected to the Ukrainian Central Committee. Counting the memberships of all the other Central Committees of republics and various other commanding positions, this meant that in 1927 he had not yet reached the three to four thousand strong "General Staff of the Party". His climb up the hierarchical ladder resulted, in seven years, in his outranking some three to four thousand persons. At the same time Malenkov was not elected to the Central Committee and Bulganin was made only a candidate member. One should bear this in mind, when considering the struggle for succession after Stalin's death.

The Seventeenth Party Congress in 1934 was the "Congress of Victors". Collectivisation of agriculture was nearly complete, the Party was victoriously purged of some three hundred thousand members, and a long series of trials had led to the execution of several thousand "enemies of the people".

Khrushchev was one of the principal orators, speaking in the name of the important Moscow delegation. After denouncing the rightist deviation which "tried to use the . . . Moscow

organisation in the struggle against the general line of our Party", Khrushchev reported the Moscow victories:

The leadership of our Leninist Central Committee and above all of Comrade Stalin personally, has been felt by our entire Party. We workers in the Moscow organisation have felt this leadership . . . *personally of Comrade Stalin directly and particularly from day to day in all questions*. . . Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin the Right has been beaten in our Party, beaten in the Moscow organisation [which is] . . . ideologically united around the Central Committee, around *our genius leader, Comrade Stalin*. This principled ideological unity has been achieved thanks to the able daily leadership which we have had in the person of Lazar Moiseyevich Kaganovich.

We have carried out in our Moscow organisation a purge which has still more strengthened the fighting capacity of our ranks. (Emphasis added.)

There was nothing extraordinary in this part of Khrushchev's speech. Most speakers used the same language, often even the very same sentences. They all praised Stalin extravagantly, many called him a genius. Kirov proclaimed that Stalin was "the greatest leader of all times and of all peoples".

Khrushchev furthered his Party career and proved himself a staunch and very clever Stalinist in the next part of his speech:

We must fight against the incorrect understanding on the part of some, of the process of creating a classless society. There are some who understand this question in the following way: We can, they say, rejoice . . . soon there will be no classes and we will not have to continue with the class war. [But] *the class war will not diminish*, and we must mobilise the forces of the Party, the forces of the working class, *to make stronger the organs of the dictatorship of the proletariat* for the final annihilation of the class enemies, of all the remnants of the Rightists and 'Leftists' and all the other opportunists who have wanted and who want to put brakes on our further successful movement forward. (Emphasis added.)

In his secret speech on Stalin's crimes in 1956 Khrushchev categorically stated that after the annihilation of the exploiting classes the class-war should have been diminished. He said:

Stalin's report at the February-March 1937 Central Committee Plenum . . . contained an attempt at the theoretical justification

of the mass-terror policy under the pretext that as we march forward towards socialism, class war must allegedly sharpen.

Khrushchev then emphasised that Stalin thus deviated from the clear and plain precepts of Lenin to the contrary.

But in 1934, Khrushchev by preaching that the class war would not diminish, earned the approval of Stalin. Naturally the OGPU leaders also liked his demand that the "organs of the dictatorship" should be made even stronger.

As head of the Moscow Party Committee, Khrushchev had ultimate power over the Committee's press. *Pravda*, the national daily, was until 1952 under the joint control of the Central Committee and the Moscow Party Committee. But the Moscow Committee had its own "organs", among them the important *Vechernyaya Moskva* (Evening Moscow), the evening tabloid of the capital. Khrushchev's name began to be mentioned with increasing frequency in *Pravda*, and much more so in *Vechernyaya Moskva*. He took good care that on all festive occasions and at public functions where he appeared at Stalin's side, photographs should be taken and published in the Moscow tabloid. As Moscow First Secretary he performed alone many public functions, and his picture adorned the reports. The American historian William K. Medlin mentions in his excellent study of Khrushchev, that in 1936 about thirty per cent of the issues of *Vechernyaya Moskva* carried a picture of Nikita Khrushchev. Naturally he figured also in *Pravda*, *Izvestia* and *Trud*.

During his secretaryship he showed a great deal of interest in the building of the Moscow underground. He was often photographed in some tunnel or other talking to the "heroic workers" of the underground. The public image which he tried to build up was that of a Party leader whose main interest lay in the practical problems of building up socialism. He visited regularly the most important factories and construction sites. Press reports show him as systematically controlling the fulfilment of the Five Years Plan; helping industrial plants in their problems; getting in touch with the corresponding People's Commissariats to secure material, finance, experts for "his" plants; acting as trouble-shooter and trouble-solver—in short a "constructive functionary".

There is a great deal of evidence to show that this was not empty propaganda. He did indeed help to produce results. Where he could, he fought for safety installations in the underground construction and in the industrial plants. Wherever he could do so, without getting into trouble, he appeared as a friend of the workers.

Soon he was to receive a new appointment in addition to his First Secretaryship. In 1933 Kaganovich had become the head of the new Agricultural Political Department of the C.C., consisting of 18,000 Party activists to lead the anti-kulak offensive. This organisation received plenary powers over the Soviet countryside. In 1935 Kaganovich became Commissar of Railways. Khrushchev succeeded him as chief controller and administrator of kulak-liquidators.

The new Stalinist Central Committee and Politbureau, elected by the "Congress of the Victors", had started to cause trouble for Stalin. With the exception of such staunch supporters of the iron fist policy as Molotov and Kaganovich, many of the other leaders advised a lessening of the mass-terror. Proven supporters of Stalin were despatched to various regions of the Soviet Union to put things in order—and saw for themselves the results of mass-terrorism, saw the hostile mood of the workers and peasants, the rebellious atmosphere not only in the universities but also among the younger Party intellectuals. Under the impact of these experiences, they advised a stricter control of the OGPU and an end, or at least a let-up, in the anti-kulak offensive. General Blücher, the Red Army commander in the Far East, appealed to the Politbureau to exempt the Far East from the collectivisation drive. He was not prepared to take responsibility for defending the Far Eastern frontiers if there were a desperately hostile peasantry in his immediate hinterland. His plea was supported by Voroshilov and plans for Far Eastern collectivisation were dropped.

In the spring of 1934 the majority of the Politbureau decided on a limited amnesty for the "lesser criminals" among the rebellious peasantry. The procuracies again received orders to control the excesses of the OGPU. Kirov, Ordjonikidze, Rudzutak, Kalinin and at times even Voroshilov openly criticised the OGPU. Voroshilov could not help being influenced by the anti-OGPU mood of the army. The other

leaders experienced in their government and Party work that the general fear of the OGPU and the constant uncertainty attendant upon personnel solutions led to breakdowns, complications, chaos. Important functionaries were constantly being arrested while executing vital orders. Many Party and government circulars spoke of unnecessary, unjust arrest, Kirov, Ordjonikidze and the others wanted to end indiscriminate mass-terror; and wanted no terror at all against their own Communist functionaries. They demanded a strict Party control over the OGPU which should be finally placed into the framework of "socialist legality". Stalin had to agree to a reorganisation. A new Commissariat of Internal Affairs (Narodnii Kommissariat Vnutrenniy Dyel—NKVD) came into being. In addition to establishing a Party control mechanism over this new secret service body, it was placed legally (governmentally) under the supervision of the new Attorney General of the Soviet Union. The critics of the OGPU knew of course that the NKVD would be more "legal" and prudent only if the Party controls were better and if the new Attorney General were an independent official. All this was promised. Stalin made bureaucratic concessions and paid lip-service to "socialist legality" to gain time.

Sergei Kirov, Stalin's erstwhile favourite, headed the Leningrad Party organisation, with the task of defeating the opposition there and of putting an end to the rebellious mood of the Leningrad Communists. Although he applied harsh methods, he retained enough of his revolutionary idealism to transmit to Stalin those criticisms and complaints which he thought justified.

The people of the Soviet Union were tired, enervated. So were the Party members. The whole country craved for a lessening of tensions, for a quieter, safer existence. Kirov, Ordjonikidze, and even Voroshilov and Kalinin shared this feeling. As long as they spoke up in the Central Committee and the Politbureau in this spirit, and *as long as the Central Committee members could afford to agree with them without risking prompt arrest*—there was a great danger for Stalin that "liberalisation" would go on, that the majority of the governing bodies of the Party would agree to the diminishing of class war. There was a danger that first the Politbureau and the Centcom would be

democratised, and later free speech and discussion would infect the lower Party organs as well and, at the end the hated secret police would be disbanded, and the Soviet experiment would collapse. Whatever the possibilities, the next consequence of further "liberalisation" would have been the fall of Stalin himself.

Something had to happen. It happened soon!

On the evening of December 1, 1934, Sergei Kirov was murdered by a certain Nikolayev. Khrushchev in his anti-Stalin speech in 1956 spoke at some length about the Kirov murder:

It must be asserted that to this day the circumstances surrounding Kirov's murder hide many things which are inexplicable and mysterious and demand a most careful examination. There are reasons for the suspicion that the killer of Kirov, Nikolayev, was assisted by someone from among the people whose duty it was to protect the person of Kirov. A month and a half before the killing, Nikolayev was arrested on the grounds of suspicious behaviour, but he was released and not even searched. It is an unusually suspicious circumstance that when the Chekist assigned to protect Kirov was being brought for an interrogation, on December 2, 1934, he was killed in a car "accident" in which no other occupants of the car were harmed. After the murder of Kirov, top functionaries of the Leningrad NKVD were given very light sentences, but in 1937 they were shot. *We can assume that they were shot in order to cover the traces of the organisers of Kirov's killing.*

The traces were well covered. On the evening of the murder Stalin rushed to Leningrad and personally interrogated the NKVD functionaries there. He was in Leningrad when the mysterious car "accident" happened. There are two clues as to the instigator and organiser of the murder.

The first is that Kirov's murder gave Stalin a chance to stop at once, and most brutally, the slight attempt at liberalisation. It was used by him as a pretext to give his secret police the long sought for Central Committee and Politbureau blessing to the execution of Communist leaders. It gave Stalin a chance to take into his hands unlimited power, to execute literally anybody, unlimited by the Central Committee or the Politbureau.

The second clue is perhaps even more conclusive. We have it from Khrushchev. In his 1956 anti-Stalin speech he informed

the world that on the very evening of Kirov's murder Stalin had already prepared the infamous decree which virtually ordered the immediate execution of all those who were charged with "anti-Party" and "anti-State" crimes. The pretext for this decree was Kirov's murder. Khrushchev said in 1956:

After the criminal murder of S. M. Kirov, mass repression and brutal acts of violation of Socialist legality began. *On the evening of December 1, 1934, on Stalin's initiative* (without the approval of the Political Bureau—which was given two days later, casually) the Secretary of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee, Yenukidze, signed the following directive:

1. Investigative agencies are directed to speed up the cases of those accused of the preparation of execution of acts of terror.

2. Judicial organs are directed not to hold up the execution of death sentences pertaining to crimes of this category in order to consider the possibility of pardon, because the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR does not consider as possible the receiving of petitions of this sort.

3. The organs of the Commissariat of Internal Affairs is directed to execute the death sentences against criminals of the above-mentioned category immediately after the passage of sentences.

This directive became the basis for mass acts of abuse against Socialist legality. During many of the fabricated court-cases the accused were charged with the "preparation" of terroristic acts; this deprived them of any possibility that their cases might be re-examined, even when they stated before the court that their "confessions" were secured by force; and when, in a convincing manner, *they disproved the accusations against them.*

The killing of oppositionists and of innocent Stalinists and, in Khrushchev's words, "mass-repression" against Communists started on a grand scale with Kirov's murder. We do not know the number of Communists executed by Stalin during the 1935-9 period. Khrushchev himself furnished some illuminating facts. Of the 1,966 delegates to the Congress of Victors in 1934—1,108 were arrested and charged with "anti-Party" crimes. Of the 139 Members and Candidate Members of the 1934 Central Committee ninety-eight were executed. If eighty per cent of the Congress delegates and seventy per cent of the C.C. members were arrested and executed, the mortality rate among minor functionaries cannot have been much less. "What is the

reason that mass repression against Party activists increased more and more after the Seventeenth Party Congress?"—asked Khrushchev and proceeded to give this answer:

It was because at that time Stalin had so elevated himself above the Party and above the nation that he ceased to consider either the Central Committee or the Party . . . Stalin thought that now he could decide all things alone and all he needed were *statisti*: he treated all others in such a way that they could only listen and praise him.

[*Statisti* is a theatrical term, meaning actors without speaking parts, film "extras".]

So the surviving apparatchiki listened and praised—and occupied the positions emptied by the mass killings. Khrushchev benefited greatly. In 1935 he succeeded Kaganovich as first Party secretary of the huge central region of Russia, the Moscow Oblast. He also became a Candidate Member of the Federal Presidium, while retaining his position as chief of the Agricultural Political Department. *Pravda* wrote on this occasion: "N. S. Khrushchev is an outstanding representative of the post-October [revolution] generation of Party-workers brought up by Stalin."

In his various positions he had large secretariats working for him. His personal secretariat was enlarged to include all sorts of experts. Well trained Marxist theoreticians watched the Soviet press, the theoretical periodicals, the scientific monthlies, the various Party publications, for him. He had to read only short, pithy reports calling his attention to symptoms of any and every possible change in the Party line, indications of reorganisations, demotions and promotions. As far as this was possible in the Stalin era, he was now able to keep himself well informed.

His personal circumstances changed also with his arrival at the top. A larger flat in Moscow, a country home—a dacha—in the vicinity of Moscow, a special villa in the Crimea for holidays; several cars at his disposal, special shops to buy all the things which ordinary mortals could not dream of, VIP treatment in theatres, in the Bolshoy and all the other privileges enjoyed by the leaders on the top.

And exceedingly long working days. Daily conferences with

his Moscow City and Province Secretariats, frequent conferences with the committees; long discussions with his department heads; at the Central Party Headquarters; meetings and mass-meetings, in addition to all the current work of controlling the political and economic life of his province; directing industrial and agricultural activities. And intrigue, in-fighting, jockeying for position in a climate of constant fear.

As Khrushchev's erstwhile sponsor, Kaganovich had been gradually eased out of all functions in the apparatus and transferred entirely to governmental posts, the position of Number Two after Stalin was not quite filled. In ceremonial listings Molotov's name usually figured after Stalin's but Molotov was Premier, not a full-time apparatchik. Great vistas opened up for such "Stalin-men" as Beriya, Bulganin, Khrushchev and Malenkov. They realised that if they managed to survive the bloody purges, they might arrive at the pinnacle of Soviet power. So fear was mixed with great expectations.

In his anti-Stalin speech Khrushchev mentioned that Yenukidze as C.C. secretary signed the terror decree on Stalin's "initiative" on the day of Kirov's murder. Khrushchev conveyed the impression that he did not approve of Yenukidze's action in complying with Stalin's wishes.

In 1935 he also disapproved of Yenukidze but for entirely opposite reasons. On June 13, 1935, *Pravda* reported a Khrushchev speech to the Moscow Communist "activists":

The active listened with special attention to the second part of the report which dealt with the official apparatus of the Secretariat of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR and with Yenukidze. A few months ago in this same hall of the Conservatoire, the sad news of the murder of Sergei Mironovich Kirov struck the Moscow active like a thunderbolt. The shot which struck Comrade Kirov showed that our enemies stop at nothing. Exposed and maddened, they resort to any kind of foul deed, from setting fire to kolkhoz sheepfolds, poisoning food in workers' canteens to murder of the leaders of the people. All the necessary deductions should have been drawn from this signal. Yenukidze, however, having lost all the qualities of a Bolshevik, preferred to be a "kind uncle" to the enemies of our party.

Comrade Khrushchev spoke about the contamination of the official apparatus of the Secretariat of the Central Executive Committee, and about the political and moral degeneration of

Yenukidze, who had allowed the sworn enemies of the working class to penetrate into it.

The Party showed great trust in Yenukidze, giving him responsible work to do, said Comrade Khrushchev, but he did not justify that trust. He betrayed the cause of the revolution. He degenerated politically and morally. Even in the plenum of the Central Committee of the Party he spoke not like a Communist but like a bad business manager, a petty bourgeois, a degenerate. His expulsion from the ranks of the party proves once again that the Bolsheviks show no mercy to anyone who flouts the responsibilities of a Communist.

To thunderous applause from the whole hall, Comrade Khrushchev appealed for still greater vigilance, for a fight against rotten liberalism, for a still greater closing of the ranks of the Moscow Bolsheviks around the Central Committee and the Leader of the Party, Comrade Stalin.

Yenukidze was promptly arrested. He was shot in December 1937. The Khrushchev speech quoted above had no other significance than praising Stalin's action. Khrushchev himself had no hand in the preparation of the purges, or in deciding which leading Communist should be arrested. Stalin and his NKVD worked in the greatest secrecy. Top leaders took part in important public functions a day before or on the very day of their arrests. Marshal Tukhachevsky for instance stood next to Stalin on top of the Lenin Mausoleum during the May 1 parade in 1937. A few days later he was arrested and on June 12 his execution was announced. Stalin gave orders for arrests at the last minute.

But when a leading personality was arrested, his entire hierarchical retinue was smitten down also. If an "anti-Party centre" or a conspiracy was revealed—that is, fabricated—a network of accomplices had to be produced all over the Soviet Union. The apparatchiki had to co-operate with the NKVD in finding or, rather, appointing members of these non-existent networks. There was here great scope for Party secretaries to get rid of rivals or have their vengeance on personal enemies, by hinting to their NKVD contact that so-and-so ought to be "investigated". Many apparatchiki exploited these chances. We have no documentary evidence either to prove or disprove that Khrushchev too exploited his opportunities.

Stalin was still dissatisfied with the scope of the blood-letting.

In September 1936 he and Zhdanov sent the following telegram from Sochi to the Politbureau:

We deem it absolutely necessary and urgent that Comrade Yezhov be nominated to the post of People's Commissar for Internal Affairs. Yagoda has definitely proved himself to be incapable of unmasking the Trotskyite-Zinovievite block. The NKVD is four years behind in this matter.

So Yezhov, a leading member of Stalin's secretariat, became NKVD chief. The Politbureau did not question the curious expression that the NKVD was "four years behind" in arrests and executions. The appointment was duly made and the "monster-period" of Soviet history, the "*Yezhovchina*" started. According to Khrushchev "the number of arrests jumped ten times between 1936 and 1937". Once more "many thousands of innocent Communists died".

For not a single second could one feel safe and secure. Not even on the day of one's promotion. How many newly promoted people were arrested! Fear was there constantly. The various Party offices in the capital were full of people who pretended to be calm and cheerful, while every ring on the telephone, every knock at the door caused their hearts to beat faster. No one was safe. Stalin's long time friends, people with glorious revolutionary names were arrested and killed. One did not have to fear only the whims of Stalin, the NKVD, the denunciations which might come from any quarter, but also accidents and rumours. People were arrested because sudden tooth-ache caused them to leave their office without explanation for a couple of hours. If no one knew just where Comrade X was at the moment, people immediately thought of arrest and some of his associates—to ensure themselves—rushed to write signed denunciations against Comrade X, whereupon Comrade X was of course duly arrested. Rumour could kill just as effectively as Stalin's displeasure.

One had to be careful in managing one's publicity. If the papers carried fewer items about one's activities, people might think one was starting to fall from favour. The result—rumours and arrest. On the other hand too much publicity might make new enemies.

At committee meetings a new atmosphere prevailed during

the years of the *Yezhovchina*. Friends and good acquaintances greeted each other briefly, but committee members avoided standing about *a-deux* or in small groups. One had to be careful of associating with anyone else, lest when the other person was smitten down, his fate be shared by his associates.

Meanwhile one had to work efficiently and work a lot. As Stalin liked to work at night and might call one up at midnight or even later, it was better to stay late in the office. Some functionaries dozed in their armchairs ready for a telephone call which might mean death or promotion: on the other hand it might be just a routine call.

Stalin at this time reproached the Party members and functionaries with "having forgotten that Soviet power has conquered only one-sixth of the world and five-sixths are in the hands of capitalist states. . . . As long as our capitalist encirclement remains, we always have saboteurs, diversionists, spies. . . . *The sabotage and diversionist work has reached, to a greater or smaller extent, all or practically all our organisations.*"

The NKVD was literally instructed to suspect and investigate every organisation and every person, without regard to position, Party record, past achievements, anything. Excellent work, great results were no defence against suspicion and arbitrary arrest. Stalin constantly warned the NKVD and the Party that the enemies and spies, the oppositionists and wreckers try to avoid suspicion by *excelling in their day-to-day work*. "The real saboteur," Stalin said, "must from time to time show evidence of success in his work, for that is the only way in which he can keep his job as a saboteur. . . . We shall have to extirpate those persons, grind them down without stopping."

Services to the NKVD were no defence either. Lenin's saying — "every good Communist must be a Chekist" — was constantly being repeated and followed, yet the most faithful tools of the NKVD were constantly being arrested.

There were the personal intrigues among the leading functionaries, the unceasing efforts to publicise one's importance, the fact that one was still in favour with Stalin. And in the last analysis it was difficult to decide how much one could contribute to one's fate by all this, and how much was just plain luck. On Khrushchev's level in the apparatus seven out of every ten functionaries were executed during the years between 1935

and 1938. But as the terror was mounting, no one could see the end of it, no one could tell whether or not the chance of survival would not deteriorate to only ten or even five per cent.

Many functionaries committed suicide. Many had nervous breakdowns. And the news of arrests kept pouring in every day. The more arrests, the more dangerous the situation. Those arrested were questioned about all their contacts and associates. And the NKVD was interested only in bad, negative, damaging information about people. One never knew who was being tortured at that very minute in the cellars of Lyubyanka prison, who might try to escape a few hours' pain by falsely denouncing precisely oneself.

But the more arrests, the more openings. Every day brought the possibility of annihilation or of promotion.

Khrushchev was often promoted. In December 1936 Stalin permitted him to act as one of the sponsors of the New Soviet Constitution. In 1937 he was elected to the new Supreme Soviet and became a member of the Foreign Affairs Commission. In January 1938 he became candidate member of the Politbureau. His name was mentioned among the fifteen leaders of the Party and the Soviet Union.

More important even than these promotions was the one mentioned above in Chapter I. *His past was promoted by Stalin in a way clearly indicating that he had picked Khrushchev for future leadership.* The official "History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolshevik)—Short Course" was written and edited in 1937 and published under the Central Committee authority in 1938. Stalin was the editor and later he quoted this Party history as his own work. It was intended to become—and became in fact—the most important textbook for Communists all over the world. It was translated into more than fifty languages and for nearly twenty years Communists everywhere learned from it theory and practice and official Party history. In his 1956 anti-Stalin speech Khrushchev said that it was full of falsifications. This is true. But there was one falsification in it which Stalin specially included, stating that during the revolution and the civil war, Khrushchev was one of the political leaders. The passage stating that the "political education of the Red Army was in the hands of men like Lenin, Stalin, Molotov. . . . Khrushchev, Shvernik, Shkiryatov

and others", contained the names of such dead leaders as Lenin, Kirov, Sverdlov, Kuibyshev and Dzerzhinsky. The names of the purged leaders were of course excluded. But many leading personalities were also excluded who had more right to be called political educators of the Red Army than Khrushchev.

Bulganin's past for instance was not promoted by Stalin, although Bulganin had joined the party in 1917 and entered the Cheka. He rose quickly and in 1919 the Cheka sent him on a special mission during the civil war to the Turkestan front and he was appointed head of the Transport Board of the Cheka. Bulganin did in fact lecture a great deal during the civil war, and both because of his position and his teaching activities he had far more right to be called a "political educator". Malenkov was from 1919 until 1921 a political functionary in a squadron, regiment and brigade and worked in the Political Administration of the Eastern and Turkestan fronts. Bulganin's and Malenkov's exclusion from the list meant that at that time Stalin had no intention of promoting them to top leadership positions. The fact that Khrushchev's services during the civil war were vouched for by the most important textbook of the Communist world, strengthened his position.

While the rigged trials, the great confession trials, puzzled the outside world and led to the execution of Kamenev, Zinoviev, Bukharin and hundreds of other leading personalities; while most of the generals and five thousand top ranking officers of the Red Army were executed; while Party and government functionaries of industry and agriculture were summarily shot—some people protested and were killed, some went on to listen and to praise.

In Khrushchev's words: "Mass repression had a negative influence on the moral-political conditions of the Party, created a situation of uncertainty, contributed to the spreading of unhealthy suspicion, and showed distrust among Communists. All sorts of slanderers and careerists were active."

At the 1937 spring Central Committee plenum—we have Khrushchev's word for it—"many members actually questioned the rightness of the established course regarding mass repressions". The opposition was most ably expressed by Postyshev who even dared to doubt the guilt of some of those arrested

by the NKVD. Postyshev and all of the "many members" of the Central Committee who opposed Stalin's mass slaughter, were arrested and executed. Kirov, Ordjonikidze, Rudzutak, and scores of other high ranking Communists had to die because they could not be silent about their misgivings, about their indignation and shock. They—like all those in the higher ranks of the apparatus—knew that Stalin was choking men morally and physically. It was obvious that Stalinists with long revolutionary records who had spent many years in tsarist prisons; who fought well during the revolution and the civil war; who remained loyal to Stalin during the bloodless purges of Trotskyites, Bukharinites and the rest—that these proven revolutionaries were slandering themselves when they confessed to spying, anti-Party conspiracy, sabotage and even murder plots. It was obvious that these people could not have conspired to kill Kirov, that they could not have been agents of Trotsky, of the Japanese, German, American and other intelligence services.

Khrushchev stated something in 1956 which had been well known in the upper region of the apparatus for decades, when he said that "with monstrously falsified fabrications he [Stalin] killed thousands of Communists" and that his rule was that of "torture and oppression".

Khrushchev was there in 1935, 1936 and 1937 when certain high ranking functionaries spoke up publicly against all this. But he did not try to defend the innocent. Instead he denounced the victims. When the first *étape* of the mass executions was over, Khrushchev said of the victims:

"By lifting their hand against Comrade Stalin, they lifted it against the best humanity possesses. For Stalin is our hope, he is the beacon which guides all progressive humanity. Stalin is our banner! Stalin is our victory!"

V

RULER OF UKRAINE IN PEACE AND WAR

"In January 1938 N. S. Khrushchev was elected First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine; in 1938 he was elected candidate member of the Politbureau . . . and in 1939, after the Eighteenth Party Congress, a member of the Politbureau. During the Great Fatherland war of 1941-1945, N. S. Khrushchev was with the Army in the field. . . . Simultaneously with his work at the fronts, N. S. Khrushchev . . . conducted work of great magnitude in the organisation of the all-peoples partisan movement in the Ukraine against the German Fascist invaders. . . ."

(Large Soviet Encyclopedia, Vol. 46, 1957)

IN 1937 Khrushchev stood on top of the Lenin Mausoleum, next but one on Stalin's right. Only the famous Comintern leader Dimitrov stood between him and Stalin. A tattered worker's cap on his head, with raised arm, Khrushchev looked down on the multitude in the Red Square. His face was serious, intent and in a way blank—the blank face of a man who for many years had to control his facial muscles all the time, whose expression had to be stereotyped to the apparatchik pattern. All the apparatchiki learned the art of synthetic expression, of smiling with their mouth while their eyes remained unlit, watchful, attentive. As the Stalin era progressed most leading apparatchiki became past masters of the art of strictly controlled verbal and facial expression. The fact that for years they could rarely abandon themselves to whims, to sudden ideas, to laughter or real anger, showed on their faces. In their manner, even in their gestures, they tried to imitate Stalin.

Khrushchev by this time was in frequent contact with the "genius leader".

Stalin was a very distrustful man, diseased with suspicion; we know this from our work with him. He could look at a man and say: "Why are your eyes so shifty today?" or "Why are you turning so much today and avoiding to look me directly in the eyes?" The sickly suspicion created in him a general distrust even

towards eminent Party workers whom he had known for years. Everywhere, and in everything, he saw "enemies", "two-facers", and "spies". . . .

In the situation which then prevailed, I talked often with Nikolai Alexandrovich Bulganin; once when we two were travelling in a car, he said: "It has happened sometimes that a man goes to Stalin on his invitation as a friend. And when he sits with Stalin he does not know where he will be sent next, home or to gaol!" (Khrushchev's 1956 anti-Stalin speech.)

Bulganin's remark, according to Khrushchev, was made to him after the purging of Postyshev in 1937. It shows a surprising degree of trust between these two. If Khrushchev had told Stalin of Bulganin's remark, the latter would have been executed, and Bulganin could have finished Khrushchev off by asserting that he had meant it as a provocative question and Khrushchev had not protested. But the quotation also gives an idea of the atmosphere these men lived in.

Bulganin became in 1938 deputy Chairman of the U.S.S.R. Council of People's Commissars and head of the State Bank of the USSR. He and Malenkov were still outranked by Khrushchev.

The seven years during which Khrushchev worked in the Moscow City and Oblast Party organisation, and the great purges, gave him ample opportunity to fill the Moscow apparatus with his own creatures for whom it was a question of life and death importance that their own chief should not be liquidated. All those apparatchiki who had been promoted several times by Khrushchev knew very well that they would fall with him. Stalin did everything to destroy ties of friendship and loyalty in his apparatus. But by the very technique of the mass-purges, he created these new negative or defensive loyalties. Of course he realised this too, and for this reason he took good care not to leave anyone too long in one or the other commanding position. He liked rivalry and intrigue between his lieutenants. It would have been deadly dangerous for Stalin had, for instance, the powerful Leningrad, Moscow, Ukrainian and Eastern Party organisations been led by a group of friends. These Party organisations controlled the majority of the votes in the Central Committee and on the Party Congresses. By playing their leaders against each other, he kept the balance. The other

method was to shuffle them around. Khrushchev was also due for a change.

In the Ukraine, Kossior had now been head of the Party organisation for nearly ten years. The "Kossior-apparatus" had to be purged. In 1937 Khrushchev became a member of a "purge-troyka" sent to liquidate "the enemies of the people" in the Ukraine. The other members were Molotov and the dreaded NKVD chief, Yezhov. The purge-team worked effectively. Most members of the Ukrainian Cabinet, of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet and of the Ukrainian Central Committee were summarily executed. According to conservative estimates sixty per cent of the Ukrainian CP apparatus was liquidated, not to speak of the thousands of ordinary Party members, and their accomplices, the "class-hostile" elements among non-Party people.

According to the official Soviet *History of the Ukraine*:

With the arrival in the Ukraine of the close comrade-in-arms of Stalin, N. S. Khrushchev, the eradication of the remnants of the enemy and the liquidation of the wrecking activities proceeded particularly successfully.

We have Khrushchev's word for it, and thousands of Supreme Military and other Court decisions in the nineteen fifties, that there were no plots, no wreckers, no enemies. The purge in the Ukraine, as anywhere else in the Soviet Union, hit thousands and tens of thousands of innocent victims.

While Molotov and Yezhov returned to Moscow, in January 1938, Khrushchev was transferred to the Ukraine as first secretary of the Centcom there. He was candidate member of the Soviet Politbureau, full member of the Ukrainian Politbureau and member of the Ukrainian legislature's presidium, and soon he took over the Kiev City and Oblast first secretaryship also. In his new capacity as dictator of the Ukraine, under the dictator-in-chief Stalin, he had to conclude the purges.

The monster period of Soviet history, the *Yezhovchina*, was drawing towards its end. Ten days before Khrushchev's appointment to the Ukraine, on January 19, 1938, a new decree of the Central Committee was published in Moscow: "*On Mistakes by Party Organisations in Excluding Communists from the Party.*"

The new decree, with the usual Stalinist technique, charged *some* Party leaders and functionaries with intolerable excesses during the purges. The decree found scapegoats for the worst horrors of the Yezhov terror. The decree served another useful purpose. During the last *étape* of the purges the remaining anti-Stalinists, waverers and "soft-pedallers" had to be liquidated and *charged with the cruelties and injustices they themselves had opposed*. In the Ukraine, Postyshev who openly dared to doubt the guilt of the purge victims, Kossior and others were accused of most of the excesses of the policy of terror. Stalin and the Politbureau in the centre, Khrushchev and his new men in the Ukraine, could now pose as defenders of "socialist legality". They punished by death the Ukrainian Party leaders for the mass-murders of the NKVD which these leaders had been powerless to stop.

But this decree served another purpose as well. Stalin made plans to purge the real purgers also. In January 1938 Yezhov, the NKVD chief, still seemed to be at the height of his career. He was called "the flaming sword of the revolution". But Stalin wanted to kill his accomplices. In August 1938 Beriia was appointed Vice Commissar of the NKVD and a few months later Yezhov was removed and executed. And so were several hundred top Yezhov-men in the NKVD.

Khrushchev's transfer to the Ukraine might have meant a demotion, because the Ukrainian organisation was second in importance to that of Moscow. But at the time of the transfer he became candidate member of the Politbureau, which was a great step forward.

The transfer was also a challenge. He lost the regiment of his trusted followers and subordinates in Moscow. The leading positions in the Ukraine were not filled with Khrushchev-men. Some of these were dispersed to various Party organisations in the country but Khrushchev was permitted to take with him to the Ukraine a handful of his best lieutenants. With their help he could begin to build up a new efficient Party apparatus and organise a new regiment of Khrushchev-men.

The Ukraine which he had to govern was in a sorry condition indeed. Industrial and agricultural production was lagging, there was general chaos in transportation and in supplying

raw-materials to industry. Ten years of bureaucratic elephantiasis had devastated the economy of the country. In the prevailing atmosphere of suspicion and fear, bureaucratic controls were multiplied to an almost unbelievable degree. Each "unit", be it a mine, collective farm, factory or transportation centre, was controlled by a great number of governmental, municipal, Party and NKVD organisations. The appropriate Commissariats and the Central and local Planning organisations showered questionnaires and instructions on the "units" which had to prepare reports in eight or nine copies. The proportion of bureaucrats to those engaged in production grew enormously. The directors of mines, factories, kolkhozes were choked by red tape.

This bureaucratic elephantiasis alone would have been sufficient to sabotage the economy. The purges did the rest. Since the earliest purge trials the experts were a suspected class. Engineers, economists, agronomists were arrested by the thousands. They were arrested to serve as members of non-existent spy rings, they were arrested as "class-hostile" non-Party people, and mostly as saboteurs. When the contradictory or impossible orders, the disregard of expert advice or the poor quality of the raw materials caused breakdowns, it was easiest to cry sabotage and arrest the experts. There were plants in the Donbass heavy industrial regions in which four or five sets of engineers and directors were arrested during the nineteen thirties. This contributed to the general chaos.

The situation was of course the same all over the Soviet Union. But Khrushchev, as the new governor of the Ukraine, received an overall picture of all this when he took over. At this decisive stage of his career he had a synoptic picture of all the horrors, anomalies and senseless, unnecessary diseases of Soviet life. Since the early thirties he could not help knowing much of the inside information on the purges. For years now he had had to brand as despicable enemies of the revolution people whom he knew to be innocent. To him in his high position many of the intended victims or their families appealed for help which he was unable to give.

Did all this shake his Communist convictions? There is no indication of this. His belief that moribund capitalism would soon be succeeded everywhere in the world by Communism,

remained unshaken. He had his misgivings about Stalin's methods. But he led an exceedingly busy life which left very little time for reflection. Like all the other leaders he very rarely (if at all) could afford the luxury of non-functional thinking, of pondering on problems which were not urgently immediate.

Now, in the Ukraine, he had to produce quick results. He had to extricate the country from the general chaos, without being able to diminish multiple bureaucratic controls or to dispel the climate of fear. For a long time he had both to help the NKVD in purging those falsely accused of the earlier excesses and to go on purging "real" enemies, who were just as innocent as the others.

As in Moscow, now in the Ukraine he saw to it that in the public eye he should figure as a constructive leader, interested mainly in agricultural and industrial development. He travelled up and down the Ukraine, visiting mines, steel mills, collective farms, building sites, workers' clubs, technological institutes. Everywhere he "mixed with the people", had himself photographed talking to peasants, miners, students. By cutting through red tape wherever he could, by more efficient administration and by the greater authority he enjoyed as a newly appointed and hence probably favoured governor, he achieved some results. In this he was also helped by the fact that the NKVD drive against experts had now slackened and Khrushchev was able to save his best experts from arrest.

For although Stalin kept in his hand the supreme direction of the NKVD and personally decided the arrest of important functionaries, the hundreds of medium and thousands of lesser functionaries were arrested in the Ukraine upon the joint decision of Khrushchev and the Ukrainian NKVD chief. The Ukrainian NKVD prepared the list of those to be arrested. Khrushchev as Party chief approved the list and instructed his apparatus to expel those doomed from the Party. Some arrests were suggested by himself or by his apparatus. Former supporters of Kossior, Chubar and Postyshev were mercilessly purged. Khrushchev now had the power to get rid of all those whose existence might be in any way embarrassing for him.

In his public addresses he constantly preached vigilance against the class-enemy and against those who "wormed themselves into the Party". He became the feared and hated

dictator of the Ukraine, hated as the arch-purger and as the director of the new Russification drive.

At the Fourteenth Congress of the Ukrainian CP in June 1938, Khrushchev made it quite clear that the Party was against excesses in the purges, but *"legal" purges were still necessary*: "We have destroyed a considerable number of enemies," he said in Kiev, "but by no means all. . . . As long as there exists capitalist encirclement, they [the capitalists] will send us spies and saboteurs."

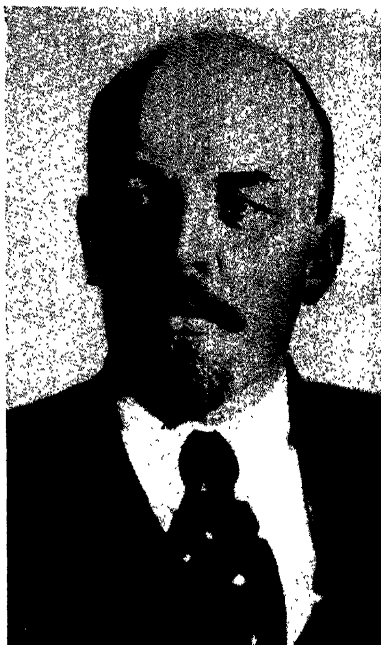
He made a strong attack against Ukrainian nationalism, and expressed great indignation over the fact that "the language of Leninism-Stalinism"—the Russian language—had no preferential treatment in the Ukrainian schools. He blamed for this the liquidated Ukrainian intelligentsia and the remaining nationalists.

Enemies of the people—he said—bourgeois nationalists, knew the force and influence of the Russian language and Russian culture. They knew that this was the influence of Bolshevism, the influence of Lenin-Stalin on the minds of the Ukrainian people. . . . Therefore they pushed the Russian language from the schools. In many Ukrainian schools they taught German, French, Polish and other languages, but not Russian. The enemies tried by all means to separate the culture of the Ukrainian people from Russian culture. In Kiev, for example, there was not a single newspaper in the Russian language.

Khrushchev knew, of course, just as everybody else in the Ukraine, that "Ukrainisation" had been Party policy in the late nineteen twenties. Stalin had tried to calm down the rebellious workers and peasants in the non-Russian republics by permitting them to praise him and Bolshevism in their own language. It was a deliberate Party policy to avoid a clash with Ukrainian patriots at least on the language issue.

But in 1938 and 1939, in the growing international tension, such border republics as the Ukraine had to be made safe. Khrushchev was in Ukrainian eyes not only the grand inquisitor but also the cruel Russifier, the oppressor of Ukrainian language and culture. The Russian language became an important part of the regular school curriculum; and Khrushchev's NKVD chief "redoubled his efforts" to track down all actual and potential nationalists.

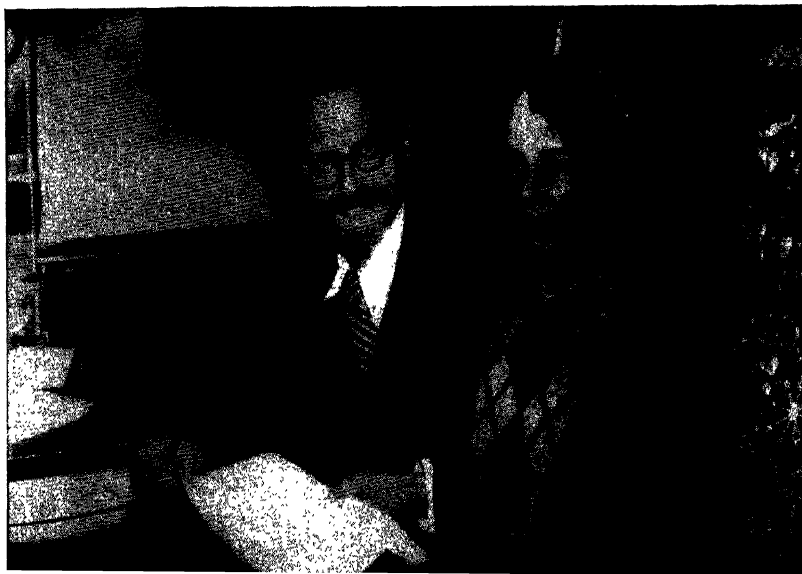
V. I. Lenin



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Leon Trotsky

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Khrushchev, Dimitrov, Stalin and Molotov: Reviewing the May Day Parade in 1937

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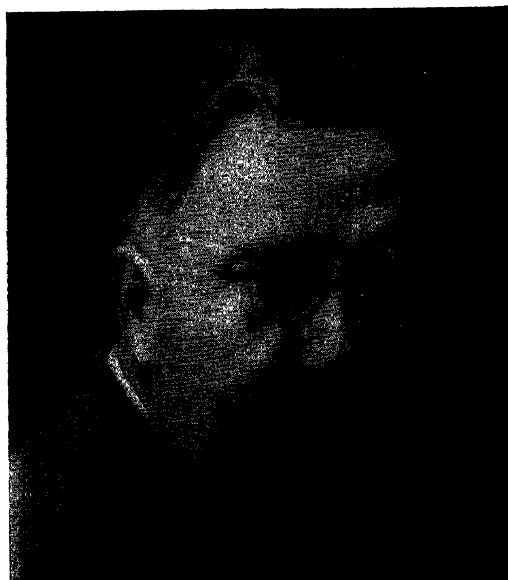
Stalin with
Khrushchev in
the Mid-thirties

G. E. Zinoviev



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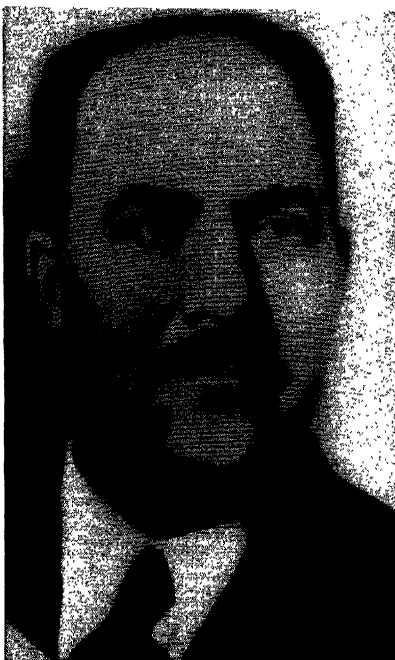


L. B. Kamenev



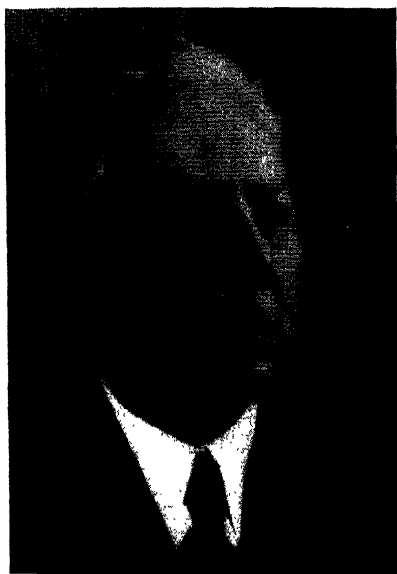
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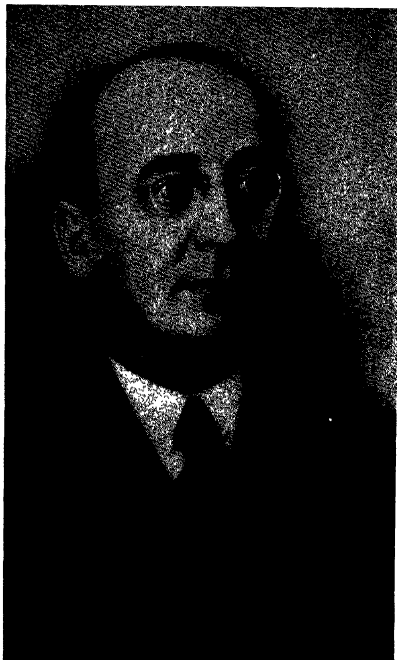
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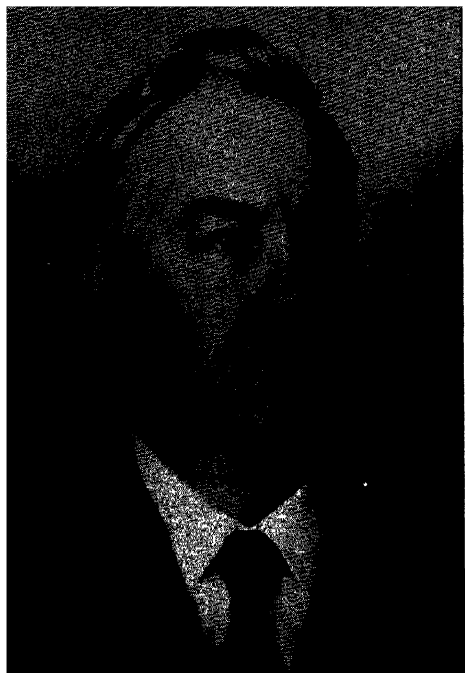


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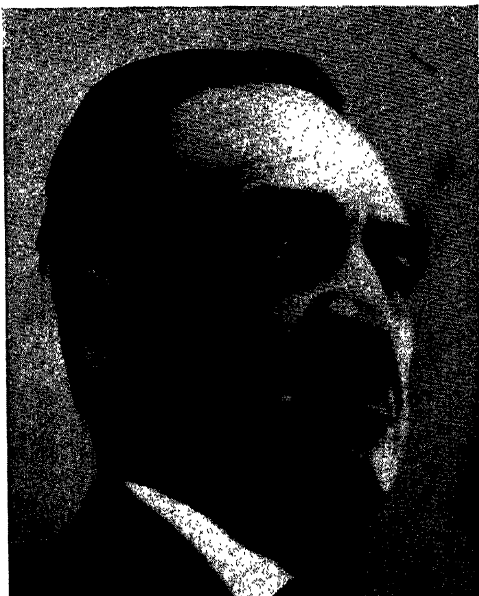
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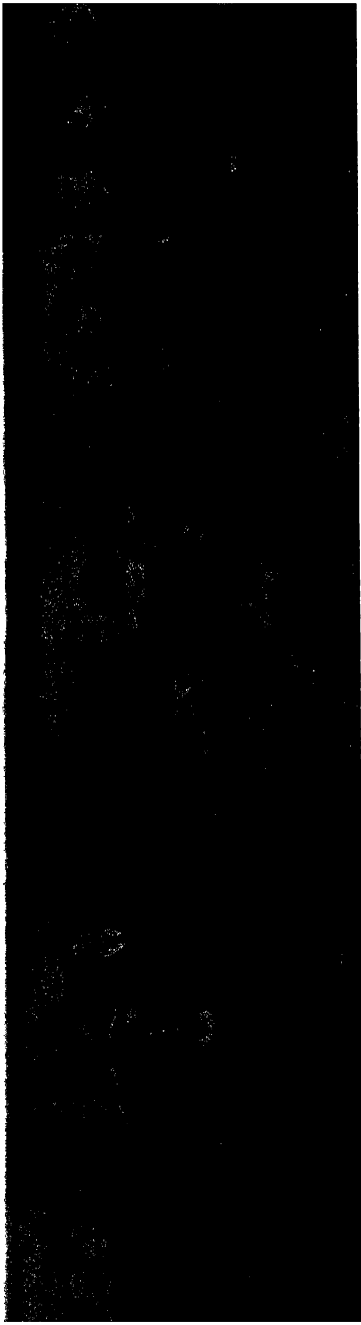
N. A. Bulganin

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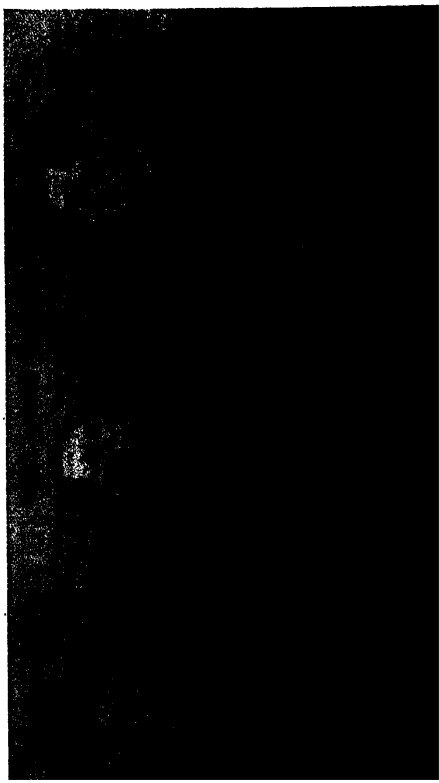
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A. I. Mikoyan



Soviet and Chinese Leaders at the
Signing of the Sino-Soviet Treaty
(*Pravda*, Feb. 15, 1950, First Page)



The Falsification of Above:
Stalin, Mao and Malenkov
(*Pravda*, March 10, 1953,
Third Page)

Khrushchev Is Elected Premier in 1958



Khrushchev's first clash with Beriya came in 1939. The new NKVD chief's first official action was *the arrest and execution of five leading NKVD officials in the Ukraine*. These officials were in fact tools of the deposed Yezhov and they had worked harmoniously with the "purge-troyka" (Molotov, Khrushchev, Yezhov) sent from Moscow to the Ukraine in 1937. They had been working for a year under Khrushchev when their arrest came. Khrushchev had by now been intimately connected with the NKVD for more than eight years. He knew very well that high Party and NKVD officials, when arrested, were forced to make confessions not only about themselves but also about their superiors. In the Stalinist system it was regarded as absolute proof that the confessed details are true since, after all, the man paid for his confession with his life. Stalin and the NKVD chiefs did not use all such charges and confessions against those implicated. But they were filed away in the so-called "black files", guarded in the most secret safes of Stalin and/or the NKVD chiefs and whenever Stalin and/or the NKVD wanted to break a high official, they simply used the accumulated material of these black files. All higher ranking members of the apparatus knew that such files existed about themselves. It was part of the routine of having always at hand compromising, damning material about everyone.

When Beriya executed the Ukrainian NKVD chiefs, Khrushchev knew that Beriya too not only had a black file about him inherited from his predecessors, but that these black files now contained new charges against him. He too had committed many "excesses" in the Ukraine.

Beriya's other action was a general revision of all cases of expulsion from the Party. Many thousands of Ukrainian expelled Party members were reinstated by Beriya on the grounds that they were innocent, that they had been expelled because of personal intrigues and slanders. Beriya could, on the basis of this, accuse Khrushchev any day of thousands of unjust expulsions.

At the Eighteenth Party Congress, Beriya moreover suggested that the apparatus should stop blaming all mistakes and breakdowns on enemies and saboteurs. This was of course a further warning to all those, who like Khrushchev, had taken part since 1934 in the direction of the purges.

Khrushchev knew that Beriia's actions and hints did not constitute an immediate danger. But an NKVD chief is always dangerous for all the other leaders. As yet Khrushchev's vigilance and even his excesses in purging the Ukraine were in the current Party line.

Stalin was satisfied with Khrushchev. At the Eighteenth Party Congress of the Soviet Union, in March 1939, Khrushchev was made a full member of the Politbureau. The Politbureau listing now was: Stalin, Andreyev, Kaganovich, Kalinin, Mikoyan, Molotov, Voroshilov, Zhdanov, Khrushchev.

He was now one of the acknowledged eight rulers of the Party and the Soviet Union under Stalin. He received the Order of the Red Banner of Labour. The *Pravda Ukrainy* was busy propagating the Khrushchev-cult.

His career was also furthered by the acknowledgment of his activities by Ukrainian patriots. In 1939 they threw a small parcel into his railway carriage which exploded, killing Khrushchev's two companions. His luck held and he escaped with minor injuries.

In the summer of 1939 Stalin deposed Maxim Litvinov, his Commissar for Foreign Affairs since 1930. He was convinced of the utter failure of Litvinov's attempt at collective security. Molotov was suddenly transferred to Foreign Affairs and on August 25, 1939, the world and the Soviet Union received the shock of the Hitler-Stalin treaty of non-aggression. This treaty had the entire Politbureau's approval. All the leaders were convinced that the "Western Imperialists" wanted to send Hitler's armies against the Soviet Union. Now—they felt—the trick was turned. With the non-aggression pact Stalin enabled Hitler to turn against the West. The Politbureau was also informed of the secret protocol attached to the Hitler-Stalin pact, giving Stalin a free hand in the Baltic States, Finland and Eastern Poland. Khrushchev knew that it would be his task to incorporate large parts of Eastern Poland into his Ukrainian domain.

When Hitler attacked Poland on September 1, 1939, the Red Army stepped up preparations for the swift occupation of Eastern Poland. Tens of thousands of parachutists were involved and the occupation took less than three days. The

smaller part of Eastern Poland was incorporated into Byelo-Russia, the larger into the Ukraine. Its incorporation and Sovietisation fell to Khrushchev's lot. He proceeded with his staff to Lvov, capital of Polish Galiczia, now renamed Western Ukraine. The region bordering on the new German-Soviet frontier was forcibly evacuated in a matter of days. Thousands of freight-trains and hundreds of convoys of heavy trucks stood by to cart away to prison and to the new concentration camps the petty bourgeoisie, the middle and the upper classes. Under Khrushchev's supreme direction the NKVD and the army deported nearly a million and a half Poles to the Siberian and North Russian forced labour camps. The officer corps of the Polish army and the Polish intelligentsia were summarily arrested. The newly incorporated territories had to be "disinfected" from the poison of capitalism.

All former state and local government officials, industrialists, merchants, landowners, bank employees, teachers, lawyers, judges, were summarily arrested and in most cases were deported together with their families. The NKVD arrested priests, rabbis, Polish, Ukrainian and Jewish labour leaders. All political parties were suspect, including the underground Communist party. Leaders of all political parties were arrested, first of all those of the Polish and Jewish socialist movements. Later the deportation order was extended to the Polish and Ukrainian kulaks.

Jews were treated as an ethnic group and were also deported. Six hundred thousand of them! The Red Army itself during its short occupation campaign took 190,000 prisoners of war. Roughly two million people were carted off to prison or were deported from the newly occupied territories. Western Ukraine was then overrun by Soviet Party and government officials and by the NKVD.

Khrushchev was highly praised in Moscow for his administrative efficiency in carrying out the deportations and in the Sovietisation of Western Ukraine. Incidentally it was during these operations that NKVD chief Serov earned Khrushchev's trust and esteem.

Khrushchev had also ceremonial tasks. His staff prepared the election lists for those "people's assemblies" which were to vote unanimously for incorporation into the Soviet Ukraine. Polish

Ukraine's occupation started on September 17, 1939, and on October 22 more than ninety-two per cent of the voters elected Khrushchev's list of candidates. On November 1 "Western Ukraine" was officially incorporated into the Soviet Union.

On June 27, 1940, the Soviet Union sent an ultimatum to Rumania demanding the return of Bessarabia and of Bukovina. The latter's population was "by virtue of history, language and national composition" tied to the Ukraine. The next day, the Red Army began the occupation of these territories. Khrushchev again had to work on incorporation and deportation. His Ukrainian Republic was growing enormously in population and territory. In the newly incorporated territories he started collectivisation of agriculture, socialisation of industry and commerce. The country which he governed with its nearly forty million inhabitants had a long common frontier with the outside world, hence anti-spy vigilance had to be most intensive.

During the three years from 1938 to 1940 he had gained manifold experience in ruling a large country. He experimented with model collective farms; with growing corn as a fodder base; with the problems of potato production, while at the same time he was ultimately responsible for the most important heavy industrial region of the Soviet Union, for the Russification and disciplining of large non-Russian populations; for the incorporation of new populations used to the capitalist way of life; and for intensified defence preparations. Those Western commentators who marvelled at the ease with which Khrushchev, the "newcomer", governed the Soviet Union after 1956, evidently did not take into consideration the decade during which he governed the great Moscow province and the Ukraine.

On June 22, 1941, Hitler attacked the Soviet Union. Since the beginning of April warnings and reports had been streaming into the Kremlin, but Stalin refused to believe them and even ordered that no credence be given to information of this sort. But in Khrushchev's Kiev Party headquarters the reports were believed. The German armies were moving towards the Ukrainian frontier.

On the day of the attack Khrushchev was conferring in

Moscow. He hurried back to Kiev as a member of the Military Council of the Kiev District.

In his 1956 anti-Stalin speech he spoke about the first days of the German-Soviet war:

Despite these particularly grave warnings, the necessary steps were not taken to prepare the country properly for defence and to prevent it from being caught unawares. . . .

Had our industry been mobilised properly and in time to supply the army with the necessary material, our wartime losses would have been decidedly smaller. Such mobilisation had not been, however, started in time. And already in the first days of the war it became evident that our army was badly armed, that we did not have enough artillery, tanks, and planes to throw the enemy back. . . .

At the outbreak of the war we did not even have sufficient numbers of rifles to arm the mobilised manpower. I recall that in those days I telephoned to Comrade Malenkov from Kiev and told him:

"People have volunteered for the new army and demand arms. You must send us arms."

Malenkov answered me:

"We cannot send you arms. We are sending all our rifles to Leningrad and you have to arm yourselves."

Such was the armament situation.

In this connection we cannot forget, for instance, the following fact. Shortly before the invasion of the Soviet Union by the Hitlerite army, Korponos, who was Chief of the Kiev Special Military District (he was later killed at the front), wrote to Stalin that the German armies were at the Bug River, were preparing for an attack and in the very near future would probably start their offensive. In this connection Korponos proposed that a strong defence be organised, about 300,000 people be evacuated from the border areas and that several strong points be organised there: anti-tank ditches, trenches for the soldiers, etc.

Moscow answered this proposal with the assertion that this would be a provocation, that no preparatory defensive work should be undertaken at the borders, that the Germans were not to be given any pretext for the initiation of military action against us. Thus, our borders were insufficiently prepared to repel the enemy.

When the Fascist armies had actually invaded Soviet territory and military operations began, Moscow issued the order that German fire was not to be returned. Why? It was because Stalin, despite evident facts, thought that the war had not yet started,

that this was only a provocative action on the part of several undisciplined sections of the German army, and that our reaction might serve as a reason for the Germans to begin the war. . . .

Everything was ignored: warnings of certain army commanders, declarations of deserters from the enemy army, and even the open hostility of the enemy. . . .

And what were the results of this carefree attitude, this disregard of clear facts? The result was that already in the first hours and days the enemy had destroyed in our border regions a large part of our air force, artillery, and other military equipment; he annihilated large numbers of our military cadres and disorganised our military leadership; consequently we could not prevent the enemy from marching deep into the country.

As political head of the Ukraine, as member of the Soviet Politbureau and as one of the leaders of the local Military Council, Khrushchev was directly involved in all political, economic and military operations. He was in charge of economic mobilisation, of plans for evacuation of industries and of population. He had to see to it that all the important industrial equipment should be quickly dismantled and evacuated to the East. He had to give general orders for destroying equipment left behind.

The quick evacuation of hundreds of factories, of equipment, supplies, livestock, was one of the sensations of this period of the great war. It was praised by Soviet and Western observers alike and even German commentators expressed a grudging admiration. Khrushchev's administrative and organisational talents were fully vindicated.

He worked day and night, disregarding everything but work. Like the great majority of the Russians he was completely taken up with the fight. This was the first time for many years that Russians were really united. Defending themselves against the hated Hitlerite invaders was something in which everyone believed. Working in regions exposed to the most immediate danger, Khrushchev gave up the sheltered life of the top apparatchiki; his days were long successions of desperate struggles, of racing against time, of trying to accomplish the impossible.

As the German armies overran large parts of the Ukraine, he had to complete the evacuation and build up a partisan army

behind the German lines. Chosen Party leaders, army and NKVD officers were left behind to organise partisan movements, to direct partisan operations and to report about them to Khrushchev. The evacuated Ukrainian government under Khrushchev's supreme direction conducted propaganda towards German occupied Ukraine. The partisan liaison network under his command tried to get in touch with and suborn independent partisan groups. The grave danger was that hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians would go over to the German side and that large independent Ukrainian partisan armies would come into being, equally hostile to Hitler's and Stalin's régimes.

Khrushchev was chief of the Ukrainian Staff and member of the Central Staff of the partisan movement, attached to Stalin's supreme command. At the same time he was member of the Military Council of the South-Western Front.

During the war years Stalin paid even less attention to Party status, protocol and ranking. He ruled the Soviet Union and commanded the armies through his State Defence Committee consisting at first of Molotov, Voroshilov, Malenkov and Beriya. The last two were not members of the Politbureau, yet in actual power outranked now Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Khrushchev and the other Politbureau members. Malenkov's rise was a natural consequence of his becoming in 1939 a member of Stalin's secretariat and Orgbureau. Beriya, as the supreme chief of the NKVD which by now had its own troops, fleet and air-force, was also a natural choice for this key position. The NKVD units had a vital role to play in all war operations. It was their duty to machine-gun Soviet troops guilty of unpermitted withdrawal in the face of the enemy.

Khrushchev, with Zhdanov, Bulganin, Shcherbakov and other leaders, received military rank. He became Lieut.-General and served with the Kursk, Voronezh, Stalingrad and First Ukrainian Military Councils. As evacuation expert he directed the evacuation of the Stalingrad region. It was again his responsibility to have entire factories evacuated to the East together with the civilian population, all goods and supplies and livestock. Later, for a few months during the winter of 1942-3, he directed the partisan activities on the Stalingrad front.

But throughout the time that the Ukraine was under German

occupation his main task and his main interest lay in directing partisan activities and the underground Party organisation in the Ukraine. His second-in-command in the Moscow Organisation, Demian Korotchenko, whom he had taken with him in 1938 to the Ukraine, was now his commander in the field. Korotchenko often went to visit the various partisan headquarters behind the German lines, transmitting Khrushchev's orders and bringing him eye-witness reports on the situation.

And the situation was far from satisfactory. Large partisan groups while fighting well against the Germans, refused to co-operate with the Soviet emissaries and the Bolshevik-led partisan units. In the Western Ukraine large territories were held by rebel partisan groups.

As long as the German occupation lasted, Soviet propaganda directed to the Ukraine exploited Ukrainian nationalism and patriotism. When the tide turned and Khrushchev was able in November 1943 to "liberate" his capital city, Kiev, he found not only a terribly destroyed city and countryside, but knew well that he would have to fight a new and very strong revival of Ukrainian nationalism.

From June 1941 till November 1943 Khrushchev was first of all a Party Commissar attached to various armies and army councils. His work as the chief evacuator of the Ukraine and the Stalingrad sector and his co-operation with the generals in the field brought him into contact with thousands of people *outside the apparatus*. He had many occasions to resent bitterly the uninformed, arbitrary decisions of Stalin's State Defence Committee. His dislike grew of those of his rivals who were constantly at Stalin's side.

Living in various divisional and army headquarters and sharing the problems and worries of individual commanders, he developed close ties of friendship with many generals. He came to know the deep hatred of the army leaders towards the NKVD, and their resentment against the continuous interference of the political leadership in military matters.

The sections dealing with the war in Khrushchev's 1956 anti-Stalin speech had three main purposes. He wanted to destroy the legend of Stalin as a great war leader. Secondly he wanted to remind the Congress that during the war he, Khrushchev,

worked on the fronts, in close contact with the military and hence opposed to Stalin's military bungling; that during the war he was *not* a Stalin-man. And his third purpose was to link Malenkov to Stalin, to show that Malenkov was really Stalin's alter ego. In his speech Khrushchev had this to tell about the war years:

Very grievous consequences, especially in reference to the beginning of the war, followed Stalin's annihilation of many military commanders and political workers during 1937-41 because of his suspiciousness and through slanderous accusations. During these years repressions were instituted against certain parts of military cadres, beginning literally at the company and battalion commander level and extending to the higher military centres; during this time the cadre of leaders who had gained military experience in Spain and in the Far East was almost completely liquidated. . . .

And, as you know, we had before the war excellent military cadres which were unquestionably loyal to the Party and to the fatherland. Suffice it to say that those of them who managed to survive despite severe tortures to which they were subjected in the prisons, have from the first war days shown themselves real patriots and heroically fought for the glory of the fatherland.

It would be incorrect to forget that after the first severe disaster and defeats at the front Stalin thought that this was the end. In one of his speeches in those days he said: "All that which Lenin created we have lost for ever."

After this Stalin for a long time actually did not direct the military operations and ceased to do anything whatever. He returned to active leadership only when some members of the Political Bureau visited him and told him that it was necessary to take certain steps immediately in order to improve the situation at the front. . . .

Even after the war began, the nervousness and hysteria which Stalin demonstrated, interfering with actual military operations, caused our army serious damage.

I will allow myself in his connection to bring out one characteristic fact which illustrates how Stalin directed operations at the fronts.

. . . When there developed an exceptionally serious situation in the Kharkov region, we had correctly decided to drop an operation whose objective was to encircle Kharkov, because the real situation at that time would have threatened our army with fatal consequences if this operation were continued. . . .

Contrary to common sense, Stalin rejected our suggestion and issued the order to continue the operation aimed at the encirclement of Kharkov, despite the fact that at this time many army concentrations were themselves actually threatened with encirclement and liquidation.

I telephoned to Vasilevsky and begged him:

"Alexander Mikhailovich, take a map (Vasilevsky is present here) and show Comrade Stalin the situation which has developed. . . . Show him the situation on a map; in the present situation we cannot continue the operation which was planned. The old decision must be changed for the good of the cause."

Vasilevsky replied saying that Stalin had already studied this problem and that he, Vasilevsky, would not see Stalin further concerning this matter, because the latter didn't want to hear any arguments on the subject of this operation.

After my talk with Vasilevsky I telephoned to Stalin at his villa. But Stalin did not answer the telephone and Malenkov was at the receiver. I told Comrade Malenkov that I was calling from the front and that I wanted to speak personally to Stalin. Stalin informed me through Malenkov that I should speak with Malenkov. I stated for the second time that I wished to inform Stalin personally about the grave situation which had arisen for us at the front. But Stalin did not consider it convenient to pick up the phone and again stated that I should speak to him through Malenkov, although he was only a few steps from the telephone.

After "listening" in this manner to our plea Stalin said, "Let everything remain as it is!"

And what was the result of this? The worst that we had expected. The Germans surrounded our army concentrations and consequently we lost hundreds of thousands of our soldiers.

This is Stalin's military "genius"; this is what it cost us.

No doubt Khrushchev, living in the front regions, being close to the operations, experienced many of the horrors of war. He took part in many hurried withdrawals, saw fronts crumbling, scores of divisions being encircled and cut up. During the massed German attack against the Stalingrad sector, from his headquarters at Kalacha-on-the-Don he was involved in many of the desperate defensive operations. During this time, his eldest son Leonid was killed in the Stalingrad fight. Stalingrad meant personally more for Khrushchev than for most of the other leaders. He organised the general evacuation of the territory, he was in charge of the civilian population immediately

behind the front; he tried to get supplies through and tried to organise all the support the peasants and workers of the region could give to the military forces.

Yet Stalin sent Malenkov as his plenipotentiary to the Stalingrad front. Malenkov co-ordinated all operations as the representative of the State Defence Committee—Malenkov, who was at that time not even a Politbureau member.

But whatever he felt against Stalin, Malenkov and the others in the centre, Khrushchev shared their dogma-ridden suspicions of the Western allies. The German attack against the Soviet Union was no surprise for him. But he was genuinely surprised by Churchill's speech on the night of June 22, 1941, when Britain's great war leader offered brotherly alliance to Russia in fighting the common enemy.

In his anti-Stalin speech Khrushchev reported correctly that Churchill was the very first person to warn Stalin about the impending Hitlerite attack. To this Khrushchev added:

It is self-evident that Churchill did not do this at all because of his friendly feelings towards the Soviet Union. He had in this his own imperialistic goals—to bring Germany and the USSR into a bloody war and thereby to strengthen the position of the British Empire.

Khrushchev could not credit Churchill with other than imperialistic aims. He, just like the other Soviet leaders, firmly believed that Fascism is "the logical extreme of capitalism".

On the day of the Hitlerite attack the Soviet leaders expected Britain to conclude peace with Germany, now that the aim was achieved of turning Hitler's divisions against the real enemy. Churchill's announcement to the contrary came only as a slight relief. The most that Stalin and the other leaders hoped for was that Britain would carry on with the war for a few weeks.

The behaviour and statements of apparatchiki, like Khrushchev, offered ample evidence during the war years, that "Party knowledge" and conditioning by Leninist-Stalinist dogma made it impossible for them to understand the motives and actions of the Western allies. Beneath every action and statement they searched for hidden "imperialistic tricks". Twenty years of spy-mania made them see a spy in every foreign visitor to the USSR. The American and British military missions and

liaison commissions, the allied war correspondents and economic experts were surrounded in the Soviet Union with thick nets of distrust and red-tape. To meet a foreigner even in official capacity on the orders of the Party or the government, was still regarded as dangerous. Khrushchev, like most of the apparatchiki, was convinced throughout the war that the Western allies were rendering far less material help than they really could afford; that they were deliberately postponing the Second Front, hoping that Hitler would meanwhile finish off the Soviet Union. Stalin and the other civilians around him, and the political leaders of the various fronts, like Khrushchev, had surprisingly little knowledge of the war at sea and of the transportation of armies over the sea. They would not believe that one cannot transport divisions with a few convoys. In their ignorance they could not grasp that the transportation of five or six divisions is a gigantic undertaking, requiring many hundreds of large transport vessels and tremendous air cover. Hence, they listened to all explanations about the difficulties of a Second Front with hostile disbelief.

All of Khrushchev's extant remarks and speeches on the war-period show that he believed and still believes that Britain and America had one real aim during the war: to work against the Soviet Union. *Knowing* Leninist-Stalinist political science, he *knew* that capitalists could not behave in any other way. The war years strengthened his belief in another Leninist-Stalinist dogma concerning the unreliability of "the people"; of the peasants who can be easily infected with the germs of capitalism; of the workers, who "when left alone develop bourgeois trade-unionist tendencies"; of the untrustworthy intellectuals; and of the hostility of all patriots and nationalists.

When the German army had evacuated the whole of Ukraine a shock awaited the Soviet leaders. Only then did they realise the extent to which the Ukrainian people hated Soviet rule. Although millions of Ukrainian workers and peasants had been evacuated before the German onslaught, and although other millions were in the Red Army, more than a million Ukrainians went over to the Germans, while hundreds of thousands of others were now defending Ukraine against the Red Army. They simply continued the guerilla warfare against the Soviet occupation troops.

While the Red Army had to attack the retreating German armies on a huge front, many Red Army and NKVD units were fighting against the Ukrainian partisans, who were now called "Fascist insurgents". In his report to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet on March 1, 1944, Khrushchev attacked in great detail the Ukrainian nationalist insurgents whom he called Fascists and "traitors to the Ukrainian people". He even maintained that the Ukrainian nationalist forces had fought against the Germans only in order to mislead the Ukrainian people by posing as true patriots. He hoped that the promises of amnesty would decrease these forces.

Khrushchev repeated in his report the appeal of the Ukrainian Cabinet and Supreme Soviet to the insurgents. They were promised absolute pardon if they surrendered to the Red Army—and death should they persist with their resistance (*Bolshevik*, III, 1944).

Promises of amnesty and appeals to lay down arms were repeated over a longish period. Ukrainian nationalist resistance was crushed in the end by throwing army cordons around the partisan areas; by concentrated attacks; by infiltrating agents into the partisan units. It was a hard and bitter fight. Khrushchev and the NKVD tried every means. The NKVD placed in all of the liberated towns and villages boxes for denunciation. The people were encouraged, cajoled, persuaded to drop their unsigned denunciations into these boxes, addressed to the NKVD.

Two years of German occupation and contact with the capitalist-Fascist system and hopes for national independence had infected whole regions of Western Ukraine and old Ukraine. Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians were deported to the East. During the same period entire nations were deported. In his 1956 anti-Stalin speech Khrushchev said:

The Soviet Union is justly considered as a model of a multi-national state because we have in practice assured the equality and friendship of all nations which live in our great fatherland.

All the more monstrous are the acts whose initiator was Stalin and which are crude violations of the basic Leninist principles of the nationality policy of the Soviet State. We refer to the mass deportations from their native places of whole nations, together with all Communists and Komsomols without any exception;

this deportation action was not dictated by any military considerations.

Thus, already at the end of 1943, when there occurred a permanent breakthrough at the fronts of the great patriotic war in favour of the Soviet Union, a decision was taken and executed concerning the deportation of all the *Karachai* from the lands on which they lived. In the same period, at the end of December 1943, the same lot befell the whole population of the autonomous *Kalmyk* Republic. In March 1944, all the *Chechen* and *Ingush* people were deported and the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Republic was liquidated.

In April 1944, all *Balkars* were deported to faraway places from the territory of the Kabardyno-Balkar Autonomous Republic and the Republic itself was renamed Autonomous Kabardyn Republic. The Ukrainians avoided meeting this fate only because there were too many of them and there was no place to which to deport them. Otherwise he would have deported them also.

Not only a Marxist-Leninist but also no man of common sense can grasp how it is possible to make whole nations responsible for inimical activity, including women, children, old people, Communists, and Komsomols, to use mass repression against them, and to expose them to misery and suffering for the hostile acts of individual persons or groups of persons.

This is of course a blatant example of dogma-blinkered thinking. If category punishment is wrong, if women, children, old people and others should not be punished for the crimes of some of their own nationals, then what about the women, children and old folk of the "hostile classes"? Why is category punishment warranted in their case?

This section of Khrushchev's speech is also significant for its omissions. He did not mention the punishment and mass deportation of Poles directed by himself. These deportations were obviously "dictated by military considerations". But there was no military necessity for the wholesale deportation of Ukrainians and of Jews from the Ukraine after it was re-occupied by the Soviet troops. Khrushchev did not mention these mass deportations, nor those of the 250,000 Crimean Tartars and of the 400,000 Volga-Germans.

According to some commentators these omissions were due to the fact that in these deportations either Khrushchev himself

was involved, or General Serov, who was, in 1956, still his favourite. It is a fact that Crimea was in his political charge during the war and that after the war it was incorporated into the Ukraine.

From the end of 1943 Lieut.-General Khrushchev was first of all again ruler of the Ukraine. It was again his task to build up a new Communist Party apparatus there; to purge the remnants of the old one on all levels; to arrest those functionaries who had proved themselves unworthy during the occupation or who were loath to execute harsh measures now, after the many horrors of the war.

The war was still on, the Soviet armies were rolling back Hitler's hundreds of divisions; the fine fervour of patriotic feeling still fired many Russians—the Party apparatus was back to normal tasks: organisation and purges. The thoroughly plundered and devastated Ukraine had to be rebuilt. Khrushchev faced the most difficult tasks of his life. All the political, economic and cultural problems of a country of forty million people were his responsibility. The political relaxation permitted during the war had to be undone in the Ukraine. Khrushchev's domain had suffered most during the hostilities and it was now to be the first to experiment with, and give example of, reconstruction.

Khrushchev was given many additional tasks. In August 1944, he was made Chairman of the Committee set up to investigate the murder of Soviet prisoners of war, and in 1945 he was Chairman of the Commission of experts planning the restoration of Warsaw. As head of the Ukraine he was involved in planning the post-war régime in Poland. During this period he also became a member of the Council for Collective Farm Affairs of the Soviet Union, while retaining of course his full membership of the Politbureau.

When victory came—victory of undreamed of magnitude—Khrushchev was far more powerful than at the beginning of the war.

VI

YEARS OF DANGER

"After the war the situation became even more complicated. Stalin became even more capricious, irritable and brutal; in particular his suspicion grew. His persecution mania reached unbelievable dimensions. Many workers were becoming enemies before his very eyes. After the war Stalin separated himself from the collective even more. Everything was decided by him alone without any consideration for anyone or anything."

(Khrushchev's 1956 anti-Stalin speech.)

STALIN had every reason for being capricious, irritable and brutal after the war. Half of Europe was under Soviet occupation; the USSR was acknowledged and accepted as one of the great world powers; he had every prospect of building up a Communist empire with many satellites—yet at the same time he *knew* that never since the civil war years had Soviet rule been in such a weak and dangerous position.

We know now, but Stalin *knew then* that at the end of the second world war the Soviet Union was far weaker in manpower than the Western Powers assumed. She had only about twenty-five million able-bodied males between the ages of twenty and forty-five and about ten million of them were mobilised for military service. Moreover Stalin had every reason to distrust all the Soviet troops who spent any time beyond the Soviet frontiers. Contrary to the Soviet communiqués, not seven but ten million men fell during the war. More than ten million men, women and children perished during the war years from starvation, enemy bombing, enemy and Soviet executions, forced labour and forced evacuations. Even greater was the loss of potential population, including the loss of twenty million babies who were not born or who died in infancy.

Extensive and most valuable industrial and agricultural regions had been completely destroyed by the scorched earth policy of defence, during the hostilities and during the German

withdrawal. All the Donbass mines for instance were flooded, the industries of whole regions had to be built up from scratch. Plans were already made for a five years plan of reconstruction, for a tremendous all-out effort to regain Russia's role as a great industrial power, when the explosion in Hiroshima heralded new dangers and the necessity for additional unplanned-for gigantic efforts.

The people of the Soviet Union were enervated, restive, ideologically spoiled. During the war Stalin and his leadership had to exploit religious and patriotic feeling, had to relax Party control. Whatever the propaganda machinery did, the most popular and most influential group of people were the officers' corps, and not the trusted apparatchiki. The scientists and technologists, the armies of engineers and of physicians, had to be permitted greater freedom during the war than at any time since the revolution. And this intelligentsia was not firmly in the hands of the Party.

Stalin and his apparatus had done everything for decades to shield the Soviet population from infectious contact with the evil Western capitalistic world. But now in these international, United Nations times, there were on all levels daily mass-contacts with capitalist infection. The troops were gravely infected. Even in war-devastated Roumania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Austria and Germany, the Soviet troops saw with their own eyes on what an unbelievably splendid high standard the workers and peasants of the capitalist countries lived. There were hundreds of thousands of deserters. The occupation troops could not be permitted to be demobilised and to return to their homes. They had to spend months in quarantine, in re-education camps, where the very badly infected (that is vocal) minority was weeded out and carted off to prisons and camps, and the rest were "ideologically re-conditioned". In frank, conspiratorial language, they were shown the dangers of talking freely about their experiences.

There was a desperately great need for man-power. Occupation troops, occupation officials, occupation MVD officers and troops; workers by the million were needed for reconstruction and for production in the factories and on the fields.

And the mistrusted Western allies had the atom bomb with which they might start a war any day against the Soviet Union.

This is the way Stalin and his entourage saw the situation after the great victory. This is why Molotov and Vishinsky were so strangely rigid in the United Nations and at all other international meetings. This is why Stalin pressed so unreasonably for prompt and gigantic reparations. This is why the Soviet armies took so many millions of prisoners of war—after the hostilities ended. This is why the Soviet Union was in such a desperate hurry to establish Communist régimes in the Eastern European satellites.

The agreement with the Western Powers to the effect that the Soviet Union could establish “friendly, democratic régimes” in its zone, and the permission to liquidate pro-Nazi political parties, made it possible for Stalin to set up and thoroughly plunder the satellite empire. Stalin was eager to reconstruct the Soviet Union, re-establish complete isolation and go on building “socialism in one empire”.

The decades of rigid isolation and the iron curtain thrown around every Soviet official abroad, the systematic secrecy of the régime proved to be an exceedingly great help in these years. The outside world was ignorant of all these Soviet worries and weaknesses, or at least had no overall, synoptic picture of them. Otherwise Stalin’s policy of being aggressively demanding everywhere so long as he did not meet with very firm and dangerous opposition, would not have borne fruit and he would not have been able to establish his satellite empire. As it was, the new colonial governments were soon firmly established and Stalin could then proceed to propagate co-existence as a means of keeping his new acquisitions.

Capricious, irritable and brutal he no doubt was. But the manifold actions of the Soviet government were certainly not the result of one-man decisions. For all questions of foreign and internal policy he had his group of advisers, experts, executive officials. Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev was one of them.

In order to rebuild the Ukraine and also to strengthen his position in the Soviet leadership, Khrushchev concentrated enormous powers in his hands in the Ukraine. From February 1944 he was not only first secretary of the Ukraine, but also Chairman of the Ukrainian Council of People’s Commissars, member of the presidium of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet and

first secretary of the Kiev City and Oblast Party Committees. He concentrated in his hands supreme powers both in the Ukrainian Party and government. The Ukraine became his own domain, while he was well on his way to becoming agricultural chief of the Soviet Union. With his war contacts and the network of Khrushchev-men from his Moscow governorship, he was regarded as a dangerous force by his rivals.

His rivals also forged ahead. In 1946 Malenkov became a full member of the Politbureau, and was also secretary of the Central Committee, and deputy Chairman of the Soviet Council for Ministers. Zhdanov emerged from the war with the rank of Colonel-General, head of the Leningrad Party organisation and one of the most influential members of Stalin's secretariat. Bulganin became in 1944 a member of the all-important State Defence Committee and Deputy Commissar of Defence. Beriya was member of the Politbureau and Marshal of the Soviet Armed Forces in 1945. In 1946, when the NKVD was split into Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) and Ministry of State Security (MGB) he became Deputy Prime Minister, presumably charged also with the supervision of these two ministries, headed by his own men. His men governed Georgia also. *And* he was chief of nuclear affairs! Molotov, Kaganovich, Mikoyan and even Voroshilov rose in stature and influence, not to mention a string of top apparatchiki whose power was too short-lived to warrant listing here.

In 1946 the power situation was somewhat fluid. Out of the fifty leading personalities of the Party and government, more than thirty were governing abroad or engrossed in purely governmental tasks. It was obvious by then that the supreme power of the Party apparatus would soon be re-established. The days of the Generals were over. Marshal Zhukov, the great war leader, had already faded from the scene. The future power situation was to be decided by supremacy in the apparatus. Khrushchev's stature at this time is indicated by the fact that during the rivalries and jockeying for position between Zhdanov, Malenkov, Kaganovich, Beriya and the others, *an anti-Khrushchev coalition came into being*. Malenkov, Zhdanov and Beriya agreed in trying to diminish Khrushchev's growing power.

The great difficulties in the Ukraine, the resistance of the

nationalists and the intrigues within the Ukrainian Party organisation, gave them a chance to attack Khrushchev from Moscow and from within the Ukrainian Party organisation. In 1946 the Central Committee issued a warning decree from Moscow to the Ukraine. Khrushchev was forced to move some of his trusted men from various key positions. Sensing that the tide was turning against Khrushchev, many Party and government functionaries turned against him.

In March 1947, he was suddenly relieved of his post as Ukrainian first secretary and Kaganovich was sent from Moscow to take over the Ukrainian Party apparatus. This alone would not have worried Khrushchev too much, since Kaganovich had been elbowed out of the Party apparatus by Stalin for more than ten years. He had occupied various governmental positions. It was far more dangerous for Khrushchev that one of Malenkov's intimates, N. S. Patolichev, was made Ukrainian second secretary. The plan obviously was that he should be Kaganovich's successor. Khrushchev was also forced to give up his two first secretaryships in the Kiev City and Oblast organisations. He was effectively ousted from the apparatus. He retained only the Ukrainian Premiership, but in this position he was controlled not only by Kaganovich but also by Malenkov's man Patolichev. He had every reason to fear that the next step would be his losing his membership of the Soviet Central Committee and of the Politbureau.

The *Pravda Ukrainy* was no longer in his hands. He had no press and was given few occasions to make public speeches. These would in any case not have been printed without the approval of Kaganovich and Patolichev. The reorganisation of his domain went on. Many Khrushchev-men were transferred and purged. On various occasions Khrushchev had to exercise "self-criticism". He lost his MVD contacts and had good cause to fear that Beriia would hand over to Stalin his separate black file on Khrushchev. For months, while trying various desperate counter-measures, he lived with the fear that he would soon be deposed from his governmental position also, then expelled from the Party. After that—arrest and execution.

But Malenkov's protégés were too eager. Khrushchev used all his connections, and all the Khrushchev-men in various positions, to fight back. They had to help for fear of being

liquidated along with Khrushchev. In the secretariat and among the intriguing leaders there were already some doubts about the wisdom of liquidating Khrushchev entirely. Zhdanov, Kaganovich, Beriia and the others were not enthusiastic at the prospect of enhancing Malenkov's domain by ousting Khrushchev. Malenkov already had great influence in the Moscow organisation and great powers at the centre. Now, by ousting Khrushchev, the Ukraine would have been turned into a Malenkov domain. Stalin himself did not like too powerful oligarchs around him, and any further growth of Malenkov's powers was contrary to his "divide et impera" policy.

After a few months of Kaganovich-Patolichev rule, Khrushchev's Ukrainian network was sufficiently weakened. Khrushchev's friends were probably able to convince Zhdanov, Beriia and the others that Malenkov was now the greater danger. We do not know the details of Khrushchev's defensive machinations, but the result came very soon. In December 1947, he was allowed to resume the first secretaryship of the Ukraine, provided that he gave up the Premiership. Why his rivals permitted him to fill the post of the Premier with Demian Korotchenko, his second-in-command for nearly a decade, is not known. They seemed to be satisfied that the principle of separating Party and Government powers had been observed, and Khrushchev's direct power sufficiently weakened.

Apart from the years of the *Yezhovchina*, this March-December period of 1947 was the most dangerous one in Khrushchev's life. With the return to Soviet "normalcy", Stalin again started to fabricate accusations against members of the leadership. The fact that Khrushchev came out of the dangers unharmed, made his position stronger. The period of his disfavour had shown him who were his really loyal supporters in the Ukraine and elsewhere in the Soviet Union. These he could now reward with promotion and other favours.

During 1948 and 1949 he was able to secure his rule in the Ukraine. Zhdanov's death in 1948 removed one of his most dangerous rivals.

The purge-cyclones were raging over other parts of the Soviet Union and the satellite empire. The campaign against Tito was on. "Potential Titos" in the satellites were being purged by the local secret police directed by MVD General

Byelkin and his purge experts sent from Moscow. Meanwhile Stalin accelerated purge-preparations in the centre. The men around Stalin in Moscow were fighting against each other for influence over Zhdanov's domain. Zhdanov's successor as Leningrad Party chief and Centcom secretary, A. A. Kuznetsov, was summarily demoted. In July 1949, a Central Committee resolution expelled from the Party Nikolai Voznesensky, Deputy Premier of the USSR and Chief of the State Planning Commission. They and Rodionov, Premier of the Soviet Russian Republic, Popkov, the Leningrad Party secretary, and hundreds of "their men" in the hierarchy, were summarily executed. Khrushchev in his 1956 anti-Stalin speech dealt with their case in detail and went on to say:

As we have now proved, this case was fabricated. Those who innocently lost their lives included Comrades Voznesensky, Kuznetsov, Rodionov, Popkov, and others.

Had a normal situation existed in the Party's Central Committee and in the Central Committee Political Bureau, affairs of this nature would have been examined there in accordance with Party practice, and all pertinent facts assessed; as a result such an affair as well as others would not have happened.

There was indeed no "normal situation" in the Centcom and the Politbureau, but the Leningrad case was not solely the result of "Stalin's wilfulness". As Khrushchev hinted in his speeches during *his* campaign against Malenkov, this leader and certain others conducted a campaign against "Zhdanov-men" and helped Stalin in the preparation of false charges against them.

This abnormal situation and the resulting purges helped Khrushchev to advance again.

After the Leningrad case Malenkov's power was too great for the liking of his rivals. As a result of their intrigues in December 1949 Stalin decided to dismiss Georgi M. Popov from his inner secretariat. Popov was at the same time a member of the Orgbureau and first secretary of Moscow—and a *Malenkov-man*. Khrushchev was chosen to succeed him. He took over his old Moscow domain, leaving behind a network of Khrushchev-men in the Ukraine, and occupying his new position as one of the secretaries of the Central Committee. In this position he

was working directly under Stalin. The other three secretaries were Malenkov, Suslov and Ponomarenko.

In ceremonial ranking he was not yet one of the five most important leaders of the Party and the government, but in actual power he filled that role. Some of the Politbureau members—formally his equals—had neither position nor power over the apparatus. As Ministers they were under Politbureau control and direction. Khrushchev, on the other hand, was now a member of Stalin's powerful inner secretariat. As such he directed a large part of the organisational and personnel work of the entire Soviet Union. He had his Moscow domain and his followers in the Ukraine and was by now the Chairman of the Council for Collective Farm Affairs.

From December 1949 until Stalin's death in 1953 Khrushchev worked in daily contact with Stalin. The leader celebrated his 70th birthday on December 21. All his lieutenants wrote articles and pamphlets praising his genius. Khrushchev is the author of a pamphlet which was published in Moscow in Russian and in many foreign languages. The title of the English version is: "Stalin-Friendship among the Peoples Makes Our Motherland Invincible." In this pamphlet Khrushchev called Stalin "the wise father of peoples", genius, hero and war-leader, great theoretician; all garnished with the usual obligatory adjectives. And whatever he said later, he had real respect for Stalin and had every reason to be grateful to him. Although Stalin was very suspicious and capricious, Khrushchev's rivals and enemies had not been able to manoeuvre Stalin into liquidating him. During Stalin's dictatorship there was no other instance of a concentrated denunciation campaign against one of his lieutenants not leading to arrest and execution. The reason in this case was that Stalin thought Khrushchev useful in providing a counterweight against other very ambitious people in his entourage. Suspicious as Stalin was, he felt that Khrushchev constituted no danger to his rule. Khrushchev was in fact one of his most useful tools.

It is true that Stalin "separated himself from the collective", that he did not keep the Central Committee and the Politbureau fully informed and did not permit these bodies to pass decisions. *But he did not decide things alone.* He had his ministers and other

secretaries and other intimates who were charged as *specialists* to deal with the various government and Party departments. None of them had an overall picture. All of them reported to Stalin in secret and conferred with him. The decisions were not "one-man decisions" in the sense that Stalin did not discuss them with anyone or that no one influenced his decisions.

The atmosphere of complete secrecy and the fact that Stalin permitted no one to have a complete overall picture of the internal and external situation, with all the political, economic and cultural developments, activities and plans, led to many grave mistakes, caused a great deal of anxiety in the leadership—ensured that the leading figures and groups should be in a constant power-struggle against each other.

Moreover each "specialist" knew it very well that Stalin had a "control specialist". Beriia, for instance, was the supreme chief of the secret police but he knew that Lieut.-General Alexander N. Poskrebyshev, the chief of Stalin's personal staff, was *his* controller in secret and security police affairs. Poskrebyshev's organisation worked in the holy of holies; it prepared and handled reports which Stalin did not want his own official secretariat to see. It was the most conspiratorial organ within the concentric circles of conspiracies which was Stalin's apparatus.

The mysterious General Poskrebyshev was Stalin's private secretary and chief of Stalin's most private and secret armed forces. The top level arrests were carried out by this force. Such security police chiefs as Yagoda and Yezhov were arrested—swiftly and secretly—by the men of General Poskrebyshev. Neither Beriia nor the members of the Politbureau or even those of Stalin's inner secretariat knew what was afoot when Stalin closeted himself with his private secretary and private executioner (with the *possible* exception of Malenkov, who was for a while assistant to General Poskrebyshev). In the top leadership General Poskrebyshev was easily the most hated and dreaded person of all. His name was rarely mentioned or printed. It was impossible to find out anything about his armed forces, or his network of special agents *within* the NKVD, within the Party, the ministries and the Soviet diplomatic service.

In the power situation General Poskrebyshev was an enigma. No one knew anything about his technique of reporting or

about his degree of influence on Stalin. It seems that Poskrebyshv's organisation failed to penetrate that part of Beriya's network which handled atomic espionage, or if it did, the General was unable to convince Stalin of the feasibility of an atom-bomb. Beriya's Director of Intelligence in Moscow was of course well informed on atomic research. Klaus Fuchs and the other spies in the West kept the Soviet agents informed. But Stalin who had his own scientific adviser, and was very stubborn in his pet prejudices, refused to believe in the possibility of atom bombs. During the 1945 Potsdam Conference plans were ready for dropping the atom bomb in case Japan refused to surrender. When President Truman informed him of this, Stalin showed no interest, and asked no questions, merely saying that he hoped the bomb would be used. The report of the Canadian Royal Commission on atomic espionage and other material indicates that at this time the Soviet Union made no official use of the spy material. The Hiroshima explosion came to Stalin as a great shock.

Beriya and his international network of spies were vindicated by facts. Khrushchev did not mention this in his anti-Stalin speech; but the fact that the Soviet Union officially disbelieved the beginning of the nuclear age caused untold difficulties. The plans for post-war reconstruction were already under way when the first atom bomb exploded. Although Beriya's spies furnished a great deal of vital scientific information, the enormously costly laboratories, heavy-water plants and atomic piles had to be constructed. The post-war economic plans in the Soviet Union were on a most ambitious level. In order to fulfil them, the entire Soviet economy and the Soviet people had to make enormous efforts. And here suddenly was a gigantic new task, which had not been envisaged. The additional strain might have wrecked the plans had Beriya not been in a position to help.

As Soviet secret police chief, Beriya was the head of a real state within the state. With an enormous budget; with millions of cheap slave-labourers; with his own troops, fleet and air-arm; with his own farms, factories; with a great uncontrolled income and with *thousands of free scientists working for him*—Beriya was able to help.

These scientists—Russians, Germans and others—were of

course working in prison laboratories, prison scientific institutes, in special villas guarded by NKVD troops which they were unable to leave. In this sense they were not free. But they were free in another sense, which from the scientific standpoint is far more important. Being prisoners, working for the MVD, they were *free from Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist dogmas and from the constant interference of the Party apparatus.*

It is enough here to give one single instance. In the Soviet Union symbolic logic was anathema until November 1955. This discipline without which there can be no science of cybernetics was branded as a reactionary-bourgeois deviation. On the other hand, the captive German scientists, and the great Russian scientists convicted on trumped up charges, did not have to pay attention to the current scientific dictators of the Soviet Union; they could completely disregard dogmas. Beriya, and the MVD wanted results. And they produced results. From 1943 onwards, when, thanks to Stalin's refusal to believe in its possibility, Soviet scientists were deprived of funds for atomic research, Beriya's captive scientists could go on working, experimenting. All the information received from Allan Nunn May, Klaus Fuchs, Greenglass and the others, was given to them for evaluation and for help in their future work.

When Stalin was finally convinced by the Hiroshima explosion of the feasibility of the atomic bomb, Beriya was there with his scientific and technological information and with the development work in a most advanced stage. On the basis of this, Beriya was able to promise Stalin an atom bomb soon. He was charged with the supreme direction of nuclear affairs and was now able to recruit into his atomic research establishments the best scientific brains in the Soviet Union, whether under arrest or not. His agents provided him with foreign recruits, like the famous Bruno Pontecorvo, one of the original designers of the atom bomb with Fermi.

As atomic and secret police chief Beriya wielded enormous power—under Stalin. As secret police chief he was hated and despised by the population. But in the apparatus, mainly within the middle and lower echelons, and among the Party intelligentsia he was known as a cynical, daring and if possible *liberal minded man.* After Yezhov's fall, Beriya executed Yezhov's most cruel lieutenants. He was instrumental in reinstating to

Party membership tens of thousands of those unjustly expelled. He saved thousands from unjust imprisonment. He brought back thousands from Siberia and other places of exile. All this was reported in the Soviet press in 1939. Beriya dared to say at the Eighteenth Congress in 1939 that it was high time to stop blaming all mistakes, failures and breakdowns on the evil machinations of enemies, spies and saboteurs. Beriya publicised his "liberal tendencies" to offset his own long record as a murderous secret police official, to put a smoke screen around the thousands of executions and hundreds of thousands of arrests made during his rule. By appearing more liberal, he sought to avoid the fate of his predecessors, and if possible, to improve his chances for succeeding Stalin.

The handful of survivors around Stalin had been thinking of succession ever since the war. It was well known that Stalin was suffering from hardening of the arteries and that at one time of the war he was very seriously ill. (There were conflicting reports about a mild heart-attack and/or a slight stroke.) After his seventieth birthday in 1949, his entourage was in the best position to judge the declining health of the dictator.

It was obvious to them that in the fight for succession the Party apparatus—exercising total control over the government, the armed forces, press, radio, communications—would have a decisive role to play—provided that General Poskrebyshev's secret army and the MVD (jointly or fighting against each other) did not act at once. These two secret police domains could not be interfered with while Stalin was alive. After Stalin's death there was a possibility of using the Soviet army against these forces as a tool for a swift coup d'état, *but only as that*. During the last years of Stalin the army figured very little in the power struggle. The army could intervene only in the ultimate case. The generals could send their tanks into the streets, but not into Party offices and into the secret conclaves in the Kremlin or into the various power centres of the apparatus. Everything was being decided in subtle secret manoeuvres within the apparatus where the army was naturally unable to interfere.

The principal power centre of the apparatus was Stalin's Central Committee secretariat led by Malenkov, Khrushchev, Suslov and Ponomarenko. Politbureau membership meant in

some cases actual, and in other cases only potential power—that is power in case Stalin died. In that case, such government leaders outside the apparatus as Molotov, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Voroshilov could hope to regain power over the apparatus. All the Centcom secretaries, Politbureau members and government leaders were jockeying for better positions and greater prestige and trying to build up their own following in the apparatus, in the governmental system and in the army.

When Khrushchev took over his Moscow domain again and received his new position in the Secretariat, he was not yet the supreme authority on all agricultural questions. His rival was Politbureau member Andreyev. As Moscow secretary, Khrushchev again had fifty per cent control over *Pravda*, and as Chairman of the Collective Farm Affairs Committee over a large part of the agricultural press. He proceeded to propagate his old dream of “Agrogorods”, large agricultural towns which would end once for all the peasant way of life (containing the “germs of capitalism”) and would lead to a much more efficient agriculture. His plan was to liquidate gradually the villages and transform the peasants into workers of “agricultural factories”. The collectively owned fields should surround these “agro-towns” of thirty thousand or more inhabitants. The private plots would be situated on the peripheries of these towns. But the peasants would become town-dwellers, and the kolkhozes huge and easily managed units. As an “agrogorodist”, Khrushchev was in bitter theoretical opposition to Andreyev, an adherent of a system of farming with small working units. In 1950, *Pravda* attacked Andreyev’s backward system. In a speech in March 1951, Khrushchev proposed the resettlement of peasants into agro-towns. It was under his command that the number of collective farms was reduced from about three hundred thousand to one hundred thousand. Yet this was to be merely the prelude in the drive “to bridge the gap between town and country”. He drew pictures of an urbanised countryside, of agro-towns scattered across Russia, ending the last pockets of backwardness. His speech was prominently published in *Pravda*, giving the impression that his policy had official approval. It looked as if Andreyev would soon be ousted.

But *Pravda* was also controlled by the Central Committee and anti-Khrushchev forces (probably Malenkov) succeeded

in inserting in next day's *Pravda* a notice which deprived Khrushchev's speech of much of its authoritativeness by announcing that *the views expressed were a matter for discussion*. (Malenkov explicitly condemned the agro-town plan in his report to the Nineteenth Congress in 1952, though without mentioning Khrushchev's name.)

But Khrushchev nevertheless succeeded in strengthening his position and prestige as agricultural leader. As chief of collective farm affairs he directed the Machine Tractor Stations which were the political and secret police control posts of the collective farms. Through his many press-controls he built himself up as the spokesman of the peasants and a great scientific authority on agriculture. It was in these times that Beriya further angered Khrushchev by calling him at informal gatherings "our favourite chicken-statesman" or "our dear potato-politician".

But the potato-politician went on advancing. After 1950 he was on the presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and sat on various important committees of the Russian Republic and of the USSR. Each membership furnished new bases, new personal contacts and press-control for the power-struggle to come.

In 1951 the campaign was already on against Beriya in which Khrushchev, Suslov, Mikoyan and many others were probably tactical allies. Since the explosion of the first Soviet atom bomb in 1949, Stalin had been gradually turning against Beriya. In the usual Stalinist practice, first lesser Beriya-men were demoted or transferred. Beriya's man, Abakumov, was replaced as Minister of State Security by S. D. Ignatiev, *a Khrushchev-man*. This ministry and that for Internal Affairs were gradually purged of Beriya's followers.

In 1952 and early in 1953 Stalin planned a new series of purges, by which he aimed at liquidating most of the leaders and several thousand top apparatchiki. Fabricated cases were being prepared against Beriya and all former Beriya-men, against Molotov, Voroshilov, Andreyev, Kaganovich, possibly against Mikoyan; against Jews, nationalists, potential Titoists. Molotov's wife, a Jewess, was already under arrest. There were ominous signs of further fabrications.

The full significance of the Nineteenth Party Congress in

October 1952, the last Congress in Stalin's lifetime—can only be understood in the light of these new fabrications and preparations for a purge. Therefore we have to violate chronology and deal with them first.

In 1952 Minister of State Security, Ignatiev, staged three blood-purges against Beriya's Georgian followers. On January 13, 1953, a Tass communiqué announced:

Soviet security organs uncovered some time ago a terrorist group of physicians, who, by prescribing harmful treatment, sought to cut short the lives of Soviet leaders.

This group was said to consist of Professors Vovsi, V. N. Vinogradov, M. B. Kogan, B. B. Kogan, Yegorov, Felman, Etinger, Grinstein and Dr. Mayorov. Seven of the accused were Jews. They were accused of having worked for the "international Jewish bourgeois-nationalist organisation known as 'Joint' . . . a Zionist espionage organisation working for the American secret service". The Jewish Professors of Medicine were accused of poisoning Zhdanov and Shcherbakov and trying or planning to poison Marshals Govorov, Konev, Vassilevsky and other army leaders. The Professors were the leading physicians in the Kremlin. A year before Professor Vinogradov had received the Order of Lenin. Now they were beaten to confess the ludicrous charges. Drs. Etinger and Kogan died under torture. Khrushchev described this case in his 1956 anti-Stalin speech:

Let us also recall the "affair of the doctor-plotters". Actually there was no "affair" outside of the declaration of the woman doctor Timashuk, who was probably influenced or ordered by someone (after all, she was an unofficial collaborator of the organs of State security) to write Stalin a letter in which she declared that doctors were applying supposedly improper methods of medical treatment.

Such a letter was sufficient for Stalin to reach an immediate conclusion that there are doctor-plotters in the Soviet Union. He issued orders to arrest a group of eminent Soviet medical specialists. He personally issued advice on the conduct of the investigation and the method of interrogation of the arrested persons.

He said that Academician Vinogradov should be put in chains, that another one should be beaten. Present at this Congress as a delegate is the former Minister of State Security, Comrade

Ignatiev. Stalin told him curtly: "If you do not obtain confessions from the doctors we will shorten you by a head."

Stalin personally called the investigative judge, gave him instructions, advised him on which investigative methods should be used; these methods were simple—beat, beat, and once again beat.

Shortly after the doctors were arrested we members of the Political Bureau received protocols with the doctors' confessions of guilt. After distributing these protocols Stalin told us:

"You are blind like young kittens; what will happen without me? The country will perish because you do not know how to recognise enemies. . . ."

When we examined this "case" after Stalin's death, we found it to be fabricated from beginning to end.

This describes sufficiently Stalin's state of mind during the last year of his life. He planned the liquidation of the top leaders in this period, about which Khrushchev had the following to say in 1956:

Because of his extreme suspicion, Stalin toyed also with the absurd and ridiculous suspicion that Voroshilov was an English agent. It's true—an English agent! A special tapping device was installed in his home to listen to what was said there.

By unilateral decision Stalin also separated one other man from the work of the Political Bureau, Andrey Andreyevich Andreyev. This was one of the most unbridled acts of wilfulness.

Let us consider the first Central Committee Plenum held after the Nineteenth Party Congress when Stalin, in his talk at the Plenum, characterised Vyacheslav Mihailovich Molotov and Anastas Ivanovich Mikoyan and suggested that these old workers of our Party were guilty on some baseless charges. It is not excluded that had Stalin remained at the helm for another several months Comrades Molotov and Mikoyan would probably have not delivered any speeches at this Congress.

Stalin evidently had plans to finish off the old members of the Political Bureau.

Thirteen years had elapsed since the Eighteenth Party Congress in 1939. The Nineteenth Congress in October 1952 was the first post-war Congress. It was to indicate Stalin's plans for the future. The Politbureau was changed into a twenty-five man Party Presidium and many other important changes were made in the Party Statutes. Stalin himself made no report to

the Congress. The principal reports were delivered by Malenkov and Khrushchev. Malenkov's was the report of the Central Committee and Khrushchev was entrusted with the honoured task of presenting the new Party Statutes. The other main speakers were Molotov, Beriya, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Voroshilov, Bulganin, Saburov and Suslov. Khrushchev was elected to the Presidium and to the Secretariat of the Central Committee.

Malenkov achieved so much that Khrushchev had to give up his Moscow City and Oblast first secretaryship to a Malenkov-man, whereas Khrushchev succeeded in getting back the full control of *Pravda* for the Central Committee. Until then the Moscow Committee had fifty per cent control over *Pravda*. With a Malenkov-man in charge, Malenkov would have had too much power over the central daily.

But these were symptoms of petty in-fighting. The main development was, that at the last Congress in Stalin's lifetime Malenkov and Khrushchev emerged as principals of the Party apparatus. We know from Khrushchev and from a great deal of factual evidence that Molotov, Beriya, Voroshilov, Kaganovich and maybe Mikoyan were to be liquidated according to Stalin's October 1952 plans. If Stalin thought at all about succession then, Malenkov and Khrushchev seemed to be his first candidates in that order. But after the Nineteenth Congress, the situation changed. Malenkov became too influential and his various rivals and enemies started a large scale intrigue against him. During the last two months of 1952 the positions and protégés of Malenkov and Beriya were attacked by the same group of leaders. Khrushchev was a member of both groups. Much circumstantial evidence points to the existence at this time of a Malenkov-Beriya alliance. It is likely that at the beginning of January 1953 Stalin was persuaded to change the plans for the new major purges, starting with Beriya and going on to Malenkov and some of his technocrats, and only then turning against the Bolshevik Old Guard (Molotov, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, etc.)

Beriya's downfall was forecast by the announcement of the Doctors' Poison Plot in *Pravda* of January 13, 1953. The announcement accused the former leaders of the Ministry of State Security of "lack of vigilance". Malenkov, Molotov,

Voroshilov, Kaganovich (a Jew) and many others had every reason to be gravely worried. Not so Khrushchev.

What went on during the last two months before Stalin's death is still a secret. From official Soviet publications only a few symptoms can be documented. Two weeks before Stalin's death, on February 17, *Izvestia* announced the "sudden death" of Major-General of State Security, P. Ye Kosynkin, Chief of the "Department for the Security of the Administration of the Kremlin". General Kosynkin was one of the men responsible for guarding Stalin's life. The other was General M. D. Ryumin, Chief of the "Investigation Branch of the State Security Division for the Protection of Leaders". His shooting was announced in *Pravda* of July 23. His successor, General L. E. Vlodzimirski, was soon also executed (*Pravda*, December 17).

VII

THE DEATH OF THE DICTATOR

STALIN died ten minutes before ten o'clock on the night of March 5, 1953. His death was announced at six in the morning of the next day. By that time the dreaded blue-and-red-capped MVD troops had sealed off the city. The green MVD riot-wagons and trucks, the MVD tanks and flame-throwers took up positions at the main intersections, at the principal squares and boulevards. The side streets leading into the main thoroughfares were blocked by these trucks and tanks. The secret police took over. The outside world could not yet know *whose* secret police troops they were. The army was not in sight. Whoever had power over the army—this ultimate weapon in the struggle for power—could not, or would not, make use of it. It is always a difficult decision to use an ultimate weapon. But now, after Stalin's death, there was a grave risk that to call out the army against the hated MVD troops, would unleash a civil war that would destroy the Communist régime. In a country in which millions had been murdered, tens of millions arrested and in which everybody had been terrorised and silenced for three and a half decades by the secret police, whoever attacked it, could count absolutely on the army and the fanatical support of the entire population. The secret police *and* the Party apparatus—for which it stood—would have been destroyed in a matter of days or weeks.

The panicky heirs of Stalin's dictatorship knew that. They had been in continuous conference in the Kremlin since the dawn of March 2, after Stalin's haemorrhage of the brain that night.

We do not know how and why Beriia succeeded in regaining immediate and complete control of the Ministries of State Security and of Internal Affairs. In fact he did. And his rivals who hated and feared him could not call out the army against him, neither could they appeal publicly against him to the Party, much less to the people—without destroying themselves.

The inner secretariat and the leading Presidium members acted together. Their first action was to kill outright General

Poskrebyshhev, Stalin's private secretary and head of the dictator's private secret troops. Poskrebyshhev was shot, together with scores of his immediate subordinates.

Who arrested—and probably executed—the same night Generals Artemev (Commander, Moscow Military District), Sinilov (Commandant of the City of Moscow), and Spridonov (Commandant of the Kremlin guards)—we do not know. Nor do we know the reason for this action. Among the possible explanations the most probable is that these generals tried to prevent the MVD troops from occupying Moscow.

We do not know the number of those executed immediately after Stalin's death. But the nine physicians who signed his death certificate were still alive and free in 1959. This seems to rule out the possibility that he was murdered.

At six o'clock in the morning, March 6, 1953, the official announcement was made public: "The heart of Lenin's comrade-in-arms and the inspired continuer of Lenin's cause, the wise teacher and the leader of the Party and the people has stopped beating."

The world learned that "the best medical personnel had been called in to treat Comrade Stalin". The treatment was under the "continuous supervision of the Central Committee and the Soviet Government" and "under the direction of the Minister of Health".

The announcement then went on to say: "Our task is to guard . . . the steel-like and monolithic unity of the Party as the apple of our eye . . . to educate all Communists and toiling people in high political vigilance, irreconcilability and firmness in the struggle against inner and outer foes . . . the most important task of the Party and the government is to ensure . . . the greatest unity of leadership and *the prevention of any kind of disorder and panic.*" (Emphasis added.)

Decades of Stalinist training had made his heirs the most careful manipulators of words. Ordinary common sense would have suggested to them to avoid like poison any mention of the possibility of disorder and panic. Yet, they included these words in their carefully prepared communiqué because the possibility of disorder and panic was uppermost in their minds.

After decades of fear and terror, they were now dreading the reaction of the Soviet peoples, the reaction of the army, the

reaction of the outside world. The cold war was at its height. The ghost of a popular revolt and the nightmare of aggressive action by the cunning and powerful capitalist countries haunted them. They, some fifteen to twenty men, were as yet safe, protected by the tanks and flame-throwers of the MVD. But it was already Beriya's MVD and they had good reason to fear Beriya.

Their first actions were those of appeasement. By reviving Stalin's promises of collective leadership after Lenin's death they tried to appease their own fears. By granting a wide-scale amnesty, they tried to appease the Soviet peoples. By giving a prominent position to Marshal Zhukov, they tried to appease the army. By promising to carry on with Stalin's policies, they tried to appease the MVD and the die-hards in their own apparatus. By reviving Stalin's peace-campaigns and his phrase "peaceful co-existence", they tried to appease the Western powers.

The announcement of Stalin's death and the appeal for unity and for the prevention of panic and disorder were repeated hourly all through March 6. By next day, when Stalin's open coffin was placed in the Hall of Columns where once Lenin's bier had lain in state, his heirs had already announced how they had reorganised Stalin's apparatus and government.

The secretariat was reduced from ten to five members, with Malenkov as first secretary. The thirty-six-man Presidium (Politbureau) was reduced to fourteen members and candidates and the number of ministries pruned from fifty-two to twenty-five; many ministries were amalgamated. Malenkov became Prime Minister with four First Deputy Prime Ministers: Beriya, Molotov, Bulganin and Kaganovich. Mikoyan became plain Deputy Premier. Marshals Zhukov and Vassilevsky became Deputy Ministers of Defence.

Khrushchev was secretary of the Central Committee (second after Malenkov), member of the eleven-man Presidium, and Chairman of the Commission for the Organisation of Stalin's Funeral. Although decisions were taken in this commission "collectively", Khrushchev had the privilege of asking Malenkov, Beriya and Molotov to speak at the funeral.

Stalin's funeral on March 9 and the laying of his embalmed

body next to Lenin's in the Red Square Mausoleum, were conducted with great pomp. The leaders of the Soviet Union and the Communist world were there or sent representatives. Malenkov called Stalin "the great genius of mankind" whose "cause will live for ever". Beriya and Molotov spoke in the same vein. They all stressed the might of the Soviet Union, the monolithic unity of the Party. But none of them imitated the style of mystical adulation of Stalin's funeral oath to Lenin.

The announcement of Malenkov's double accession as first secretary and as Premier very naturally led to the assumption that he was Stalin's unchallenged successor. As up to the moment of the announcement Beriya's MVD troops were holding Moscow, it was also assumed that Malenkov had been and still was backed by Beriya, who was satisfied at least for the time being with the position of Malenkov's second in command.

The Party's national daily, *Pravda*, the government daily, *Izvestia*, and the entire press featured Malenkov as the new leader. Greetings poured in from provincial congresses and committees to "G. M. Malenkov, Secretary of the Central Committee and Chairman of the Council of Ministers". This was the situation for several days. On March 9 *Izvestia* published a photograph of Stalin and Malenkov. Next day's *Pravda*, in reporting the Stalin funeral, again featured Malenkov as the leader. Mao Tse-tung wrote an article for that issue of *Pravda* in which he expressed his loyalty to Malenkov and his continued recognition of Soviet leadership after the death of Stalin:

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is a Party reared by Lenin and Stalin, the most progressive, the most experienced and theoretically the best equipped Party in the world; this Party . . . will remain a model for us in the future. We profoundly believe that the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Government, *headed by Comrade Malenkov*, will certainly be able to continue the work of Comrade Stalin, to advance brilliantly to develop the great cause of Communism. There can be no doubt that the camp of peace, democracy and socialism, *headed by the Soviet Union*, will become still more united and more powerful. (Emphasis added.)

In the photographs on the first and second pages of *Pravda* Malenkov figured prominently among the other Soviet leaders. But the third page went further. It showed Stalin, Mao Tse-tung and Malenkov after the signature of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance in February 1950. We do not know how Molotov and many others felt when they opened *Pravda* that day. *For they knew that it was a falsified picture.* In the original, published on the front page of *Pravda* (February 15, 1950), Malenkov was standing well to the right among Soviet and Chinese officials, while Molotov stood next to Stalin on his right. Molotov, Beriya, Vishinsky and others had simply been cut out, and Malenkov had been moved up next to Stalin and Mao. (See the illustrations between pp. 144 and 145.)

Malenkov was very quick to start promoting his past, in the best Stalinist tradition. But it was easier to cut Molotov, Beriya and the others out of a photograph, than from public life.

March 10, the day after Stalin's funeral, was a turning point in Soviet history. Malenkov, the accepted successor, the new leader to whom even the great and powerful Mao Tse-tung expressed loyalty, was, in effect *deposed that day*. There was already a change in the press the next day. There were less quotations from Malenkov. Beriya, Molotov and others were also quoted. Malenkov ceased to be featured in bold type. On March 13 and on the following days *Pravda* no longer used Malenkov's dual title. It seemed that the Party was no longer in his hands. Instead, the Party, its Central Committee and its Presidium were featured. The stress was laid again on collective leadership.

On March 14 there was a secret Central Committee meeting the result of which became public only on March 21. It was announced that Malenkov wished to devote all his time to his duties as Prime Minister and therefore gave up his first secretaryship of the Central Committee. Why this decision was held up for six days can be fathomed from the fact that in certain provincial newspapers run by Malenkov-men, he was mentioned as first secretary and Premier on March 21 and 22. It seems that Malenkov and his associates fought for some days against his "voluntary" resignation.

Malenkov's relinquishing of his first secretaryship was taken by many as the victory of the principle of collective leadership.

That the leading rivals could not decide on the person of Malenkov's counterweight was proved by the fact that *no new first secretary was elected in his place*. Malenkov had reason to think that his rivals by keeping each other out of the first secretaryship, somewhat strengthened his position as Prime Minister.

After Malenkov's resignation the Central Committee had five secretaries. These were *in order of seniority*: Khrushchev, Suslov, Pospelov, Shatalin and Ignatiev (the former Minister of State Security). Khrushchev as second secretary was now directing the apparatus until a first secretary was chosen. Of the other secretaries Suslov was then regarded as a Khrushchev-man, while Ignatiev was definitely Khrushchev's follower. Shatalin was a Malenkov-man; Pospelov, who later joined the Khrushchev band-wagon, was a waverer. Of the five secretaries Khrushchev alone was member of the eleven-man Presidium.

In the power struggle among the top leaders, everybody was in tactical alliance against Beriya with the possible exception of Malenkov. The swiftness with which he had occupied and sealed off Moscow on the night of Stalin's death, made him suspect. He was gravely suspected of wanting to succeed Stalin (as incidentally all the others did too).

The fact that Malenkov used his double power in the first few days after Stalin's death to present himself as the leader who had already succeeded Stalin, led to another tactical alliance. All the others, Beriya of course included, agreed that no dictator should emerge, that Malenkov's powers should be restricted. It would take a great deal of space to analyse the evidence for the various triumvirates, quintets and sextets in the power struggle which came into being, often to be dissolved within twenty-four or forty-eight hours during this period.

The men who intrigued against each other, jockeyed for various positions and prepared various machinations—were tired, nervous and uncertain of themselves. The strain of their entire lives, the strain of the last months of Stalin's life and the almost sleepless days since Stalin's stroke, had worn them out. The manifold routine and private tasks, the great possibilities and dangers ahead, made them near-hysterical. They did not appear to behave as master-minds consciously working out and executing devilishly cunning plans but rather like worried improvisers. They exploited certain advantages and failed to

notice others; at times they acted like calculating chess-players, at others like bunglers. Some of them, probably Khrushchev included, served their best interests not by being feverishly active in intrigue, but by awaiting the mistakes of their opponents.

Beriya had already made his original mistake. Malenkov added new mistakes to those committed during the period of his self-publicity. After being deprived of his first secretaryship, he violated Leninist practice and Soviet protocol in his speeches and in the press by placing the government before the Party or the Central Committee. Doing so, he tried to show that the government, *his government*, was more important and more powerful than the Party. But the government was still controlled by the Party. The apparatus was slowly turning against Malenkov.

Khrushchev at this time was number five on protocol listings. Not having the rank, only the actual power, of the first secretary, he was not suspected of wanting to become dictator. There were no anti-Khrushchev alliances at this time because he was not thought to be either important or dangerous enough. And he did not and probably *could* not commit the mistake of pushing himself forward too much. He spoke, and instructed others to speak, in the name of the Party and of the Central Committee, and in the name of "Leninist Collective Leadership".

The collectivity of these rivals was genuinely united by the wish to keep each other out of supreme leadership, although they knew that monolithic unity and Party dictatorship were next to impossible through committee rule.

Prestige functions were distributed, if possible, evenly. Malenkov was introduced and nominated to the Supreme Soviet as the new Premier by Beriya. On the other hand it was Khrushchev who, speaking in the name of the Party, introduced and nominated Voroshilov as the new Head of the State (Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet).

The most important and by far the most popular action of the new post-Stalin régime was the great amnesty announced on March 27, barely three weeks after Stalin's death. This action shook the Soviet Union and had very far-reaching consequences. It was not announced by Malenkov, which would have been normal, but by the new Head of the State, Voroshilov, an obvious figurehead.

According to the amnesty decree of March 28, 1953, the following categories of convicts and concentration camp inmates were to be released forthwith, whatever their crimes: pregnant women, mothers with children under the age of ten, boys and girls under eighteen, old people and those sentenced to less than five years. All other sentences were halved, with the exception of sentences for counter-revolutionary activities, murder, or embezzlement of very large sums.

In the Soviet Union most people knew that many pregnant women, dotards, mothers with infants, and children under eighteen had been carted off and kept in prisons and concentration camps by thousands and tens of thousands. But this had never been admitted officially before.

The amnesty decree showed the Soviet people that they had not hoped for the death of Stalin in vain. It was also understood as a not very veiled attack on the secret police and on Beriya himself.

We do not know whether or not the amnesty was directed against Beriya. If so, Beriya was prompt to react. On April 3 and 4 the "Jewish Doctors' Plot" was exposed by him as a criminal fraud. The doctors were declared innocent and released.

It turned out that not nine but fifteen leading physicians had been arrested. Beriya accused the former Minister of State Security, Ignatiev, and his deputy, Ryumin, of the fabrications and on April 7 he ordered their arrest. Khrushchev, with the help of some others, was able to save Ignatiev, who was only summarily dismissed from his Central Committee secretaryship which he had held for a fortnight, but Ryumin was arrested and later executed. He and many other secret police officials were declared guilty of extorting false confessions "by methods which were inadmissible and strictly forbidden by Soviet law".

On April 14, Beriya announced the arrest of the Georgian Minister of State Security, Rukhzade, and the clearing up of the "Georgian Plot" (fabricated in 1952 by Stalin and Ignatiev as a preparation for purging Beriya). The victims of the "Georgian Plot" were declared innocent and those who had not been executed, instantly released and rehabilitated. Ignatiev, Ryumin, Rukhzade and other security police officials were accused by Beriya with "trampling down the rights of

Soviet citizens", of extracting "false confessions by impermissible means", of arresting people "on cooked-up charges". The officials fabricating the Doctors' Plot were accused of anti-semitism (racism).

From the standpoint of the struggle for power, this was again an alarming move. The re-investigation of all former plots would have entailed great dangers for most of Stalin's leading successors. So they prevented Beriya from arresting and executing Ignatiev and tried to stop him from publicising the results of his drive against former security police officials.

In the past, when Yagoda or Yezhov were purged, they were declared enemies of the people, imperialist agents, spies and criminals. The security police itself could only commit "mistakes" due to "deplorable misunderstanding". But now the MVD was publicly and openly humiliated, and accused of criminal actions, of arresting and executing innocent people. This, so soon after the general amnesty, was a very dangerous attack on the Stalinist past and on the whole system based on the Party apparatus and "its" security police.

Nevertheless the rehabilitation process went on. On April 28 it was announced that the old Bolshevik, G. I. Petrovsky, had received the Order of the Red Banner of Labour on his 75th birthday. This was the first time that a victim of Stalin's Politbureau purges had ever publicly reappeared. But Petrovsky could also be called a victim of Khrushchev, since his actual fall and arrest had happened during Khrushchev's Ukrainian purge in 1938. It looked as though Beriya and Malenkov were firing a warning shot in the direction of Khrushchev. But similar warning shots were fired also against the other leaders.

To show that Beriya and the new régime dared to strike out against "Great-Russian Chauvinism", the Russian Melnikov was removed from the Ukrainian first secretaryship to be replaced by a Ukrainian; the Latvian Minister of State Security, Kovalchuk, was replaced by a Latvian and similar changes were made in the other republics. All this was clearly a retreat from chauvinism.

On the first May Day celebrations after Stalin's death, collective leadership seemed to be still in existence. Khrushchev had learned his lesson from the first weeks after Stalin's death

when Malenkov and Beriya had made themselves unpopular in the Presidium and the apparatus by alarming their colleagues with their bids for total power. So he was cautious in using his actual power as head of the Party. All his open and behind-the-scenes moves were directed to defend collective leadership and to reassert the principle of the Party's total control over the life of the country. As far as his power over the Soviet press went, he took care that *all* members of the Presidium should be often mentioned, and that on important public occasions not only members of the triumvirate of that period (Malenkov-Beriya-Molotov) but the other leaders also should be prominently featured. The first cautious attacks against the cult of "outstanding individuals" were made at this time.

The May Day oration was delivered by Marshal Bulganin. In a restrained speech, conspicuously devoid of anti-Western abuse, the Soviet Minister of Defence repeated that according to his government "with good will and a sensible approach, all international differences can be solved by peaceful means".

At the beginning of June the triumvirate still seemed to be united and powerful. There were as yet no signs of Beriya's imminent fall. The leading article of the June 10 *Pravda* was entitled: "The Communist Party—the directing and guiding force of the Soviet people." Members of the triumvirate were mentioned as spokesmen of the Party:

The essence of the policy of our Party, set out in the speeches of G. M. Malenkov, L. P. Beriya and V. M. Molotov, lies in ensuring all necessary conditions for the still more successful construction of Communism in the Soviet Union, showing concern for the welfare of the workers, for the security of our country, further strengthening of the socialist state, consistently upholding and consolidating world peace.

But the triumvirate, and maybe first of all Malenkov, was warned:

The Central Committee of the Communist Party emphasised the perniciousness of anti-Marxist views on *the role of personalities in history*. . . . The history of the Party must be written not round personalities and biographies, but on the basis of the development and the maintenance of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism. . . . *The strength of our Party and State leadership lies in its collective character.* (Emphasis added.)

The new Soviet leadership now launched its propaganda campaign for peace and for an early Big Power meeting. There were at this time also some deeds in this direction, not only words. A relaxation of Soviet administration took place in Germany and in Austria, while in Korea an agreement for the exchange of prisoners of war was concluded and armistice negotiations were opened. There were also some courtesy moves. Restrictions of travel facilities for foreign diplomats in the USSR were eased and promises were made for more cultural exchanges. The Soviet cruiser *Sverdlov* took part in the Coronation naval review in Britain.

The East German régime also started to appease the people. It was officially admitted on June 12, 1953, that the East German Party and government had committed "serious mistakes" with "the consequence that many people have left the Republic". The decision to socialise German economy was renounced, land requisitioned from farmers was restored to its owners, the enforcement of deliveries was eased. Secondary school pupils and teachers expelled from schools for their religious beliefs were reinstated. An amnesty was granted to persons sentenced to three years' imprisonment or less. Only the industrial workers' lot was not eased: on the contrary, the working norms were increased by ten per cent.

On June 16 a protest demonstration of workers in East Berlin turned into a riot. Soviet troops and tanks were called out and crushed the revolt. Similar revolts flared up in Magdeburg, Halle, Leipzig and other industrial districts. Soviet troops and tanks were fighting for days against the workers of East Germany.

In South Korea twenty-five thousand North Korean and Chinese prisoners of war were released and *refused to be repatriated*. The massive anti-régime vote of East German workers and Korean and Chinese soldiers came as a great shock to the Kremlin. Although Soviet propaganda spoke about "the adventure of foreign hirelings in Berlin" and "the provocation of the Syngman Rhee clique" in Korea it was clear the as yet collective rulers of the Kremlin realised that the ever-present hatred of Communist bureaucratic despotism had flared up because of Stalin's death and because of their policy of internal and international relaxations. Their panic after Stalin's death was not unfounded; the disorders had indeed started.

True to the Stalinist mental climate and general Party practice (the Party is always right), scapegoats had to be found. During the days after the East German revolts and the news from Korea, all the anti-triumvirate and anti-Malenkov factions were temporarily united. We do not know of the single moves behind the scenes. We do not know what role Khrushchev and his apparatus played in them. The die-hard Stalinists were easy to mobilise. The army generals were against Beriya and also against Malenkov who had earned their hatred during the war—when he was Stalin's right-hand man in the State Defence Committee. The generals also had their misgivings about Malenkov's "more consumer goods" policy which threatened the supremacy of heavy industry and therefore armaments production. Thousands of MVD officers and their accomplices in the apparatus had every right to fear that Beriya would execute them for their past crimes. The victims of Beriya's anti-chauvinism drive also had good connections. Many members of the Presidium and the apparatus were against Beriya because he tried to decrease Party control over the MVD. Moreover Beriya supported Malenkov and there was some danger that he might transform the MVD into an organ of the government, not of the Party. At this time there were already worrying signs of an anti-Stalinist, anti-terrorist ferment within the Soviet Union, among the Party intelligentsia, the workers and the students.

Beyria was well on the way to turning himself, in the public eye, into the principal opponent and liquidator of the Stalin-terror. The fact that he had been brought in to end the monster-period of the *Yezhovchina* in 1938; that he had released thousands of prisoners and hundreds of thousands of forced labourers after Stalin's death; that he had attacked and humiliated the security police, might cause people to forget his security police past. He had also made himself popular with the Ukrainians, Georgians, Latvians, Lithuanians and other nationalities making up more than half of the population of the USSR, by turning against Russianisation. Malenkov and Molotov had every reason to fear that with the MVD power in his hand and his popularity growing, Beriya could one day push them aside and assume supreme power.

By this time the Stalin-cult was in reverse. The name of the

dead dictator was less frequently mentioned. There was no decision yet to denounce him openly, but his heirs felt that the Soviet people and the world, would not be satisfied with the arrest of lesser MVD leaders. Beriya could very well be put forward later as Stalin's evil spirt and chief accomplice.

All this led to the decision to liquidate Beriya. In the atmosphere caused by the great shock of the East Berlin revolts, Malenkov and Molotov could save themselves only by joining the anti-Beriya majority in the presidium and the apparatus. This they did, probably without much reluctance. Malenkov was given—or forced to accept—the role of proposing to the Central Committee and the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet the demotion and arrest of Beriya, and the reference of his case to the Supreme Court. Beriya was charged with anti-State and anti-Party activities; he had tried to “place the Ministry of Internal Affairs above the government and the Communist Party”. This meeting, on June 25 and 26, was not reported in the press.

Malenkov also accused Beriya of attempts to sabotage the post-Stalin relaxations and reforms.

On July 10, 1953, a joint Party and government announcement repeated the accusations against Beriya. Significantly a *Pravda* leader of that day drew the following political lessons from the Beriya case:

Only collective political experience, only the collective wisdom of the Central Committee . . . can guarantee the correct leadership of the Party and country, the unshakeable unity and solidarity of the Party ranks, the successful building of Communism in our country.

Any official, *no matter what post he occupies*, must be subject to the unrelaxed supervision of the Party. The Party organisations must regularly check the work of all organisations and departments and the activities of all leading workers. It is also necessary to exercise systematic and unrelaxed supervision over the organs of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. (Emphasis added.)

The “Party”, its apparatus, and its actual head, Khrushchev, gave a warning to all officials, the Prime Minister included, not to forget the Party's supremacy.

Pravda of July 16 carried the account of a meeting of the

Party organisations of the Ministry of Defence, whose resolution it reported as follows:

The decisions unanimously adopted by the Party *activ* of the Ministry of Defence state that the Party organisations of the Ministry and the Communists of the Soviet Army and Naval Forces will in future *remain the loyal and reliable support of the Central Party Committee*. Our whole object is to serve the cause of the Soviet people, to fulfil the decisions of the Party and government firmly and unconditionally, and to strive *to carry out the policy decided upon by the Party*. (Emphasis added.)

It was made clear that the leading participants of the *activ*, the Marshals Bulganin, Zhukov, Sokolovsky, Govorov, Budyenny and others assured the Central Committee of their loyalty, and that they would support the government only if it carried out the policy of the Party. This was a victory of the apparatus over the government. Marshal Zhukov was raised to full membership of the Central Committee.

The trial and execution of Beriya and six of his lieutenants was announced only on December 17. He was shot however between June 26 and July 10.

There are many versions of the details of Beriya's arrest and execution. In some versions Zhukov and his tanks play a prominent role. We also have a version purporting to come from Khrushchev. Bertram Wolfe, in his brilliant book *Khrushchev and Stalin's Ghost*, quotes Khrushchev's version as told to Senator Pierre Commin, a leader of the French Socialist Delegation that visited Moscow in May 1956:

Very soon after the death of Stalin we in the Presidium began to get reports of some double game which Beriya was playing. We began to have him followed and in a few weeks we established the fact that our suspicions were justified. He was clearly preparing a conspiracy against the Presidium. After waiting for a favourable moment, we designated a special session of the Presidium, to which, of course, Beriya was invited too. He appeared, apparently not suspecting that we knew anything. And right there we began to cross-question him, to adduce facts, data, to put questions to him, in other words, we put him through a cross-examination which lasted four hours.

For all of us it was clear that he was really guilty, and that this man could be dangerous to the Party and the country.

We left him alone in the room, in this very room in which we are now conversing, with him sitting on the very chair on which you are sitting now. And we went into another room and there had a discussion of what should be done with him.

Our inner conviction of his guilt was unshakeable. But at that time we did not have at our disposal a sufficient amount of juridical evidence of his guilt. And we found ourselves in a difficult position. Evidence for his consignment to a court we still did not have, yet to leave him at liberty was impossible.

We came to the unanimous decision that the only correct measure for the defence of the revolution was to shoot him immediately. This decision was adopted by us, and carried out on the spot.

But we felt much easier when, some time after his condemnation, we received sufficient and irrefutable evidence of his guilt.

This account was published in *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik*, Vol. 36, Nos. 7-8, p. 46. It was stated there that Khrushchev did not bind the French socialist leader to secrecy. This account was never refuted by Khrushchev. He said in his 1956 anti-Stalin speech:

Beriya was unmasked by the Party's Central Committee shortly after Stalin's death. As a result of the particularly detailed legal proceedings it was established that Beriya had committed monstrous crimes and Beriya was shot.

The official indictment and Khrushchev in many speeches called Beriya "a rabid enemy of the Party, an agent of foreign intelligence services" who had "wormed his way into Stalin's confidence". This "villain had climbed up the government ladder over an untold number of corpses". Beriya was of course neither a spy nor an intelligence service agent, nor a "rabid enemy" of the Party. The language of his accusers was a return to Stalinist terminology. Beriya was not shot for his crimes which were indeed many, but as a dangerous rival in the struggle for power. It took six months of investigation to justify his execution. And the justification was quite unconvincing.

The reversal of various of Beriya's reforms started right after he was shot. In Georgia, the Ukraine, Latvia and elsewhere, Beriya's appointees were demoted by Khrushchev's apparatus.

The drive was on against nationalism in all the Soviet Republics with the exception of the Russian Republic.

In replacing Beriya's men, Khrushchev put his own supporters in all those posts which carried *ex officio* membership of the Central Committee. Khrushchev's protocol listing was still number three after Malenkov and Molotov. He did not try to use his power over the press to propagate the real situation. In terms of real power he was at least second after Malenkov—as long as Malenkov did not turn against the Party apparatus. Khrushchev was most careful at this stage not to alarm his colleagues in the Presidium with his growing power, for he was working on the next step: his appointment to, or rather confirmation in his post as first secretary of the Central Committee. On September 13, 1953, this aim of his was realised. Now he was in fact and in rank in the very same position that Stalin occupied after Lenin's death.

The day Stalin died Khrushchev was a member of the Presidium and one of the secretaries of the Central Committee. He was ranked as Number Five in the leadership. He became the actual head of the apparatus on March 14, when Malenkov had to relinquish his first secretaryship. This was the outcome of the struggle for power between all the leaders, Khrushchev himself had comparatively little to do with it. He was rightly placed. He had a very long past in the apparatus, he had been continuously a member of the Central Committee for the past nineteen years and of the Politbureau or Presidium for the past fourteen. The fact that he had the Party apparatus in his hand made it possible for him to exploit the further intrigues between the rivals for succession, and to use the enormous power of the apparatus in order to achieve his official accession to the first secretaryship. This rank was as yet not spelled with capital letters. It was his own doing however that he soon became *the* First Secretary and the dictator of the Soviet Union. With the apparatus in his hands this was to be expected.

During the next period the outside world seemed to watch in surprise as Khrushchev, "this simple and hearty *newcomer*" ousted his rivals in well-calculated stages. This is like being astonished that a surgeon with decades of uninterrupted practice can in fact perform operations.

VIII

TECHNOCRATS AGAINST VERBOCRATS

MALENKOV, like Khrushchev, was entirely a product of the Lenin-Stalin Party apparatus. But unlike Khrushchev, he was of lower middle-class origin, had had secondary schooling and after the civil war had studied from 1921 to 1925 at the Bauman Higher Technical Institute in Moscow where he had obtained a diploma as an engineer. He was one of the thousands of secondary school graduates, who after proving their loyalty to the Party were chosen by the apparatus to become members of the Party's very own technological élite. This élite was expected to carry out the industrialisation and modernisation of the USSR. It was to counterbalance three other groups in the Party and the apparatus: 1. the Bolshevik Old Guard, 2. the Marxist intellectuals, 3. the non-expert apparatchiki.

The Party-trained engineers were soon joined by similarly trained experts in economics, military sciences, etc. The word "expert" simply meant university education. As Stalin killed off, or at least ousted, most of the Bolshevik Old Guard and Marxist intellectuals, two distinct groups or rather categories remained, the "technocrats" and the "verbocrats".

Both were apparatchiki. But while the basic attitude of the "verbocrats" to all problems was verbal, that of manipulators of the proper words, the "technocrats", could offer concrete instructions and solutions.

Khrushchev was always very good at verbocracy. In September 1934, when the Moscow underground was under construction, a dangerous fire broke out in the section between the Sverdlov and Dzerzhinsky Squares. Khrushchev, as Party secretary, rushed to the scene and made a fiery speech calling for volunteers. To the fifteen volunteers he then made another speech concluding as follows: "This fire is our enemy. And you know, boys, what you have to do with an enemy. You grab his throat and squeeze him to death!"

A technocrat would have preferred to give concrete technical

instructions on how to extinguish the fire. Stalin often ridiculed his verbocrat-apparatchiki who thought that with "stern revolutionary decrees" or "fiery Marxist incantations" all problems could be solved. The apparatchiki saw themselves as great war-lords in the battle for the victory of Communism. But from the art of the war-leaders they used as a rule one bit only: the exhortative speech on the eve of the battle.

During and after the great purges, the "technocrats" (by this term we mean not only engineers but economists and other experts too) were used by Stalin to fill many non-technological positions. Stalin trusted his apparatchiki engineers so much that he replaced scores of career diplomats with them in the foreign office and in the diplomatic network. Gromyko, for instance, represents the hundreds of engineers who on Stalin's orders turned themselves into foreign affairs experts.

Although Khrushchev, thanks to his luck and his singular capacity to survive all purges, became a great expert in apparatus management and later an expert in governing provinces and even republics, like the Ukraine, he remained basically an organiser-verbocrat. Intrigues in the apparatus, organisational moves, decrees, speeches—his art was in these spheres.

Malenkov, on the other hand, became one of Stalin's most trusted "technocrats". Here was a loyal apparatchik, a proven Stalin-man, an expert engineer who had the engineer's ability to learn and understand precisely problems of industry, economics, government and army-management. It was in this capacity that Stalin placed Malenkov in his inner sanctum, his most secret private secretariat headed by General Poskrebyshev.

Stalin, like all Communist leaders, had an ambivalent attitude to intellectuals. As dictator he feared, distrusted and despised them. As a Marxist he grudgingly admitted their necessity. But he infinitely preferred the non-ideological, non-emotional approach of the engineer. Malenkov represented the "technocrats" on Stalin's supreme State Defence Committee. Stalin sent him as a trusted reporter and trouble-shooter to the Leningrad, Moscow, Volkhov and Stalingrad fronts. He was also given the task of increasing aircraft production during the war.

After the war, when there were already new classes of

Party-trained experts in all fields of science, industry and economics, this new élite, together with the practice-trained managers, became a distinct category of Soviet society. If one is expert in one branch, one understands the problems of experts in all other branches in fighting against the verbocrats and bureaucrats. In this sense the engineers, the managers of factories and of trusts, the army officers, the scientists, the writers, the university students—all were members of the new Soviet intelligentsia. At times an apparatchik-technocrat was nearer in views to a non-Party expert than to his colleagues in the apparatus.

Stalin by ousting the surviving old Bolsheviks—like Molotov, Kaganovich and Mikoyan—from current work in the apparatus, pushed them nearer to the new intelligentsia. Kaganovich and Mikoyan had been supreme managers of industry and commerce for decades. Molotov was engrossed after 1939 in foreign affairs. They were in a sense “more expert than red”, that is more experts than apparatchiki. They were the natural allies of Malenkov, the technocrat.

Khrushchev had on his side the apparatchiki, and all those whose position or category made them natural opponents to the too swift rise of the new intelligentsia.

The technocrats, headed by Malenkov, had the population on their side because they were obviously opposed to the supremacy of verbocrats and bureaucrats. This was their strength. But being experts, they paid far too much attention to their own work, to the concrete solution of the building of socialism. They had insufficient time for intrigue and manipulation within the apparatus. This was their basic weakness.

Moreover the struggle for power between the new intelligentsia and the apparatchiki went on in an entirely new situation. The dictator's death and the first actions of his panicky heirs brought certain irrevocable changes. Malenkov and Khrushchev learned very soon that, in order to win the fight for succession, intrigue and manipulation within the Party and government apparatus were not enough. As soon as Stalin died, they all experienced *great pressure from below*.

In this transition period, the *people* also played an important role in shaping things to come. Not “the people”, or “the masses” of the Party textbooks, but the millions of ordinary

and extraordinary human beings living in the Soviet Union. Their pressure had a considerable influence on the political personality of the Kremlin leaders, Khrushchev and Malenkov very much included.

The anti-Stalin wave rolling over the Soviet Union was unorganised, shapeless, often inarticulate. Khrushchev, Malenkov and the other expert technicians of totalitarian dictatorship were of course used to disregarding the wishes, feelings and unvoiced demands of the people. But after Stalin's death the instruments of dictatorship were themselves in a crisis. The great amnesty and the official humiliation of the MVD had alarmed the security police. The determined drive against over-bureaucratisation, the halving of the number of ministries, produced a transitory chaos in the administration. The army, which as a power-group had just started to assert or reassert its own identity, was openly hostile to the MVD and critical of too much Party interference, while the members of the Party apparatus dreaded the dangers of the transition period until the power-struggle should be over and *the normal organism of dictatorship re-established by the emergence of the new dictator*. Many younger apparatchiki and rank-and-file Party members believed or pretended to believe the professions of "collective leadership" and they demanded the same thing for all the Party committees everywhere—in effect they demanded something like limited democracy within the Party.

With the Party, the MVD, the network of government officials and the army in such a state, the rivals in the fight for succession could not think of terrorising the people into silence. They had to pursue their policy of appeasement, which only led to an ever greater pressure from below.

After three and a half decades of terror and misery, of a hopelessly dreary existence—Stalin's death gave hope to the people. There was a general, shapeless, vague hope that now there was a chance of easing the stranglehold on their lives, a hope of some change. The amnesty, the attack on the MVD, the obvious signs of desperate power-struggle at the top, the promises of legality, of more consumer goods, of a peaceful policy—all these showed that the dictatorship was wavering, the terror abating. Impulsive people started to risk imprudently frank remarks—and found agreement and approval. The MVD

was in trouble, so there was less fear of informers. In factories, Party cells, in canteens and even in trains and streetcars, more and more people spoke up. Ilya Ehrenburg was to give a name to this period a good year later in his novel entitled *Thaw*. But as soon as the numbness after Stalin's death was over, the *thaw* set in.

The word was given many meanings, all of them relevant. As far as ordinary people were concerned it also meant *their* thaw. Decades of terrorism had frozen the people. Fear, suspicion, distrust had atomised them into a frozen isolation. In most places and ages when thousands of ordinary people had met together, they had drawn encouragement from each other and from the sheer force of their own numbers. The Stalin epoch had changed all that. People could no longer afford to trust each other. Mass-meetings in Stalin's times consisted of thousands of intimidated and isolated individuals. His death and its immediate consequences started to *thaw* this frozen isolation.

This thaw was accelerated by the thaw at the top and by the thaw in the press and radio and in literature; and in its turn it accelerated these other "thaws".

Those local Party secretaries and other Party and government officials who came into daily contact with ordinary mortals, were in this period nervous, uncertain, friendly. As private persons they too had every reason to crave an end to constant fear. In the political stratosphere of the Kremlin liberalising winds seemed to be blowing so the apparatchiki on the lower grades could also risk appeasing the people.

The great amnesty brought hundreds of thousands of witnesses out of the prisons and concentration camps. There were very few people in the lands of the Soviets during this period who did not hear some first hand account of torture and of the horrible existence of the innocent prisoners. New waves of indignation rolled over the country. The official denunciation of a few MVD officers for extorting false confessions from innocent people made it permissible to talk about these things. In the past one whisper about these horrors would have meant immediate arrest.

The majority of the six million outer Party members and even thousands and thousands of apparatchiki were also

affected. The opportunists, those who had joined out of fear or hope of advancement, saw the necessity of dissociating themselves from the crimes of the terror. Those apparatchiki, who were themselves badly compromised, tried to obliterate their past by loud denunciations of MVD terrorism. The "real Communists", the "idealists" who up till now had been blinkered or who had persuaded themselves that the liquidation of innocents represented only isolated mistakes, were now intent on "rejuvenating Communism". They wanted to secure basic changes that would make the "violation of socialist legality" impossible in the future.

The press—and of course all the press is official Party-press—and the resolutions of the Central Committee attacked the cult of outstanding individuals and the violations of *democratic centralism*. This made it possible for Party members and for the apparatchiki, to speak up, to criticise and propose reforms. They were influenced of course by the ferment of hope and resistance among the people. The pressure from below—something almost like public opinion—could be felt with increasing intensity at the top.

In poems, articles, plays, short stories and novels the thaw was asserting itself with increasing vehemence. Things were written, published and printed which could not have been even whispered before. These writings should be regarded as the visible one-twentieth of an iceberg. They are an indication of what went on below, what kind of sentiments found verbal expression at Party and factory meetings, university discussions, everywhere where people gathered. This growing wave of *expressed* anti-Stalinism was the background and one of *the main conditioning factors* of developments within the Kremlin.

Some of the early "thaw-novels", all published in 1953 before Ilya Ehrenburg's famous *Thaw*, told the story of the persecution, arrest or execution of innocent people or truthfully depicted the dreary drudgery of the Soviet proletariat. In 1953 Uspenskaya, granddaughter of the famous nineteenth-century novelist, Glab Uspensky, published her novel *Our Summer*, whose hero, Professor Lopatin, is the victim of senseless persecution. The novel contained a surprising amount of manifest exposure of the terror-régime and even more latent exposure which for the Soviet public—used to reading between the

lines—is also manifest. At the university—to give an example of this type of communication—Professor Lopatin makes this observation:

Some words lost their original meaning and a new terminology emerged. Thus for instance, the word “opinion” ceased to exist. If the trend of thought of this or that professor . . . did not coincide with the trend of thought of the director, then this was no longer called opinion . . . but an “error”. Objections . . . were called . . . not deliberations or scientific discussions but an “attack”. After an incautious professor committed an “error” and launched an “attack” his future was predetermined. . . . There was no need to argue with him. . . . They begun to work on him. If he remained stubborn, then purely administrative means came into force.

By substituting Party for director—as Soviet readers do—and knowing that “administrative means” signifies arrest, one gets the full meaning of the text.

Professor Vhikrov, the hero of Leonid Leonov’s 1953 novel, *The Russian Forest*, is also innocently persecuted. He and his daughter long for a time and country where “you do not have to lock doors, where you can have friends rather than enemies around you”. Professor Vhikrov complains often in the novel about the climate of fear and distrust, about the vile “gas of doubt . . . which makes contemporaries doubt one another”. This novel shows Soviet society made up of lonely, frightened and enervated individuals, exposed to a cross-fire of impossible demands, picking their way wearily between “blocks of lies”.

Vera Panova in her novel *Seasons of the Year*, also published in 1953, dealt truthfully and compassionately with the bleak existence of Soviet workers. In novels, short stories, plays and poems all the aspects of bureaucratic despotism came under direct or indirect attack. The writers also turned against too much Party direction of literature and as early as October 1953 lines such as these came to be printed in the Soviet Union:

The saddest thing is that some of the writers have not freed themselves from the internal censor who *for so long* sat at the side of the writer and bound his thought, his tongue. (A. Salinsky in *Lityeraturnaya Gazeta*, October 20, 1953.)

The writers openly discussed and attacked external and internal censorship and some of them—like Mariette Shaginyan

—wrote even about their own guilt in repeating the officially obligatory lies in their writings:

One does not necessarily become a liar by uttering certain kinds of lie . . . I am speaking about the special form of lie which is bred by the necessity to dissemble, to make oneself inconspicuous, to ensconce oneself, and live within oneself—the kind of lie which infected . . . many, many of us writers. That lie is essentially a defensive mask which the imperfection of social relations . . . may force one to wear until it grows to one's face. . . .

A young critic, V. Pomerantsev, in the December 1953 issue of *Novy Mir* demanded sincerity from the Soviet writers and concluded with these rebellious words:

Do not think about prosecution. Don't feel compelled to set down your conclusions, remain silent if necessary, but don't let yourself write a single line that you do not feel. Be independent.

The Soviet literary weeklies and other periodicals were full of this sort of writing in 1953. *Pravda* itself attacked in several articles the "varnishing of Soviet reality", and wrote that the theatres were empty because Soviet people were bored by the lack of conflict and lack of reality in the plays performed. The effect of this attack was a spate of realistic plays about the persecution and execution of innocent people.

The literary thaw had of course a very great effect on the general public and started bouts of free discussion at the universities. Scientists, philosophers, historians, painters, sculptors, musicians, protested against overmuch Party direction and against bureaucratic restrictions. Leading writers, like Ehrenburg and Simonov, actors like Cherkasov, famous composers like Shostakovich and Khachaturian came out strongly against Party functionaries who interfere in the arts and seek to direct artists. Typical of their spirit is an article by the composer Khachaturian in the November 1953 issue of *Soviet Music*:

I think it is high time an end was put to the present system of administrative guardianship over composers. . . . No more of your guardianship! Let every composer do his work on his own responsibility. . . . Let's allow our composers, orchestras and theatres to do as they think best, without all this petty supervision of their work! Criticism—by all means. But let's have no more "directives" from our bureaucrats, with their constant worry about being on the safe side.

"Social command" which was in effect command by bureaucrats and Party functionaries was the target of a general attack. "Can one imagine commanding Tolstoy to do *Anna Karenina* or commanding Gorky to do *Mother*?"—Ilya Ehrenburg asked indignantly.

The demand of the writers, artists, scientists, intellectuals was that they should be freed from constant outside interference. Non-artists should not prescribe how the painter was to paint or how the composer was to compose. Philosophers and scientists denounced the virtual ban on symbolic logic, on the indeterminacy principle, on the theory of relativity, on quantum mechanics. In genetics and theoretical physics, in anthropology and chemistry, everywhere scientists demanded the right of free investigation, the right to err, the right to experiment in every direction.

The general public would never have heard of the majority of these attacks, had not *Pravda* and many other papers published counter-attacks and strongly worded reprimands, written by various Party functionaries. By exposing the "anti-Party" character of articles on nuclear physics, ethnography or higher mathematics, the Party dailies informed the general public that all kinds of artists and scientists were *also* fighting to loosen the Party's stranglehold on their arts and professions. These were days when the Soviet press mirrored genuine conflicts of opinion. After decades of a total lack of public debate, this was a far greater shock and a far more real source of hope, than most outside observers thought.

The industrial and economic experts in the ministries, the "trust" and factory managers, the members of the technological élite were in their overwhelming majority on the side of the "thaw". Party control meant for them the interference of non-experts in the work of experts. The multiple controls made production expensive and slow. At this stage in the Khrushchev-Malenkov fight they supported Malenkov, as did the overwhelming majority of the population.

This had nothing to do with Malenkov's past record or personality. He was supported because as Prime Minister he too was against over tight Party controls. For the Soviet people it was a great sensation when early in 1953 Malenkov publicly slighted the Central Committee by mentioning it *after* the

government. This was rightly understood by everybody as a warning to the Party apparatus not to claim superiority over the government. For months thereafter Malenkov persistently violated Communist protocol by mentioning the Centcom after the government.

Malenkov's announcement of his New Course was the culmination of the first thaw. On August 8, 1953, the Prime Minister announced his New Course to the Supreme Soviet, *although no Central Committee decision on it had been published previously*. The New Course was a logical outcome of the policy of internal and international appeasement. The hitherto sacred primacy of heavy industry—and of armaments—was done away with. Now the light and food industries were placed by Malenkov on an equal footing with heavy industry. He announced:

The urgent task lies in raising sharply in two or three years the population's supply of foodstuffs and manufactured goods, meat and meat-produce, fish and fish-products, butter, sugar, eggs, confectionary, textiles, garments, footwear, crockery, furniture and other cultural and household goods.

To realise this task Malenkov proposed to develop "the light and food industries *at the same rate* as heavy industry".

Malenkov had no time to realise his plans. He was accused later that some of his signal successes were due to "the impermissible use of state reserves for current consumption". But production in the light and food industries was greatly accelerated and by giving a number of incentives to the peasants, agricultural output was also raised.

The New Course with its tax and price-cuts benefited the peasants and the industrial workers and gave further hope to the entire population. The intellectuals felt that the government was on their side in fighting Party controls.

The general thaw and the New Course were seen by many leading Party functionaries as a general attack on the supremacy of the Party, and consequently as a grave danger to the entire Soviet system.

There were indeed dangerous symptoms. The news of the East German risings and of the restiveness of the Soviet population also penetrated to the exceedingly large forced labour

camp districts in Northern Russia and in North-Western Siberia. There were mutinous strikes in the Vorkuta and Norilsk districts. In the Vorkuta district alone more than ten thousand slave-miners were involved and their mutiny was put down only after full-scale attacks by MVD troops.

Lack of fear of the security police and insubordination in the factories were further signs of danger. And in the apparatus it was well known that the Malenkov government and his faction in the presidium intended to do away with the summary courts and military tribunals of the MVD, that preparations were afoot to transfer the industries of the slave-labour districts from the MVD to industrial ministries, and that many slave-labour camps were to be abolished.

The leaders of the apparatus feared uprisings. The generals were worried by the downgrading in priority of the armament industry. All these fears and misgivings were exploited by Khrushchev and his faction. For the time being they were not strong enough to oust Malenkov or stop the New Course, but they made their preparations.

Malenkov, his government and his associates were too engrossed in their governmental work to notice or to be unduly worried by the piecemeal manipulations of their various enemies in the Party apparatus. In addition to current work the government machinery was in a turmoil of constant reorganisation. Right after Stalin's death the number of ministries was cut from fifty-two to twenty-five. But during seven months of the so-called Malenkov era, from August 1953 to April 1954, several ministries were re-established and others created, raising their number to forty-six. By April 1955 there were again fifty-three ministries, one more than at the time of Stalin's death! Bureaucratic elephantiasis proved to be a malady inherent in the system of multiple controls—a malady which could not be cured.

The work of the government was slowed down and complicated by the guiding and controlling activities of Khrushchev's Party apparatus.

Although officially Khrushchev became first secretary of the Central Committee in September 1953, he could not claim the same rank which Stalin had held; that of General Secretary. This rank was then abolished. Two months after attaining first

secretaryship, he still ranked as Number Three in the hierarchy after Malenkov and Molotov. Khrushchev was still careful to appear as the executor of the Central Committee decisions. Neither he nor anyone else could risk attacking the post-Stalin thaw and the New Course in its entirety. As a matter of fact Khrushchev and his faction were not greatly concerned about the New Course, they were against it chiefly because it enhanced Malenkov's power and prestige.

Malenkov felt himself safe in the knowledge of the great popularity of his New Course. He could count on the support of the overwhelming majority of the population as long as he strove to diminish Party controls. *In an open clash he would have won easily.* But an open clash would have meant turning against the Party, against the system—a plot, or a civil war, the end of the régime. Malenkov was too much a Party-man himself to think of this and he was convinced that it was not necessary. As yet, he had a majority in the Presidium, and as far as he knew also in the Central Committee.

In the Malenkov-Khrushchev struggle for power there was of course far more involved than the clash of personalities. This struggle was to decide a number of questions the importance of which cannot be emphasised enough:

1. Could the Soviet system be modified by the wish, conscious decision and general tendency of the overwhelming majority of the population and by the majority of the political leadership?

2. Could these majorities succeed in securing true collective leadership, separation of powers, direction of the Party and of the government by committees?

3. What is the essence of the Soviet system?

The wish, conscious decision and general tendency of the overwhelming majority of the population and of the majority of the Kremlin leaders was to end, once for all, the system of personal dictatorship. The people and leaders wanted to live free from fear—not only of arbitrary arrest and execution but also of arbitrary interference in their lives. They wanted—as far as normally and humanly possible—to *direct their own lives*. They wanted a system in which it would again be possible to secure one's existence, position and advance by hard work, expert knowledge, talent and strength of personality. In this

connection they were also opposed to "bloodless dictatorship". It was not enough to feel reasonably safe from sudden arrest and execution. One wanted also to be safe from sudden, senseless demotion or transfer—regardless of one's abilities, prestige and past record.

Of course all this could be achieved only by a system of true legality and by transforming the Supreme Soviet (and all other Soviets from provincial and municipal level down to the village Soviets) into bodies with precisely defined powers and tasks. The Soviets had been transformed by Lenin into rubber-stamp bodies which gave their ceremonial blessing to the decisions of "the Party". The task after Stalin's death was to change the Soviets into "parliaments", legislative bodies, passing decisions by majority vote. But according to the Soviet system all action must originate in the Party. Hence giving the Supreme Soviet the right to decide by majority vote would have meant the right of the Supreme Soviet to reject or modify Party proposals. This was clearly impossible as long as the supremacy of the Party and the monolithic unity of the régime was to be preserved.

But if the Supreme Soviet and all the other Soviets could not be parliaments, legislative bodies, then neither could the governments appointed by the Soviets be more than the executors of the Party's decisions. And—as we have already quoted—it was reasserted by the post-Stalin leadership that "any official no matter what post he occupies, must be subject to the unrelaxed supervision of the Party. The Party organisations must regularly check the work of all organisations and departments, the activities of all leading workers [functionaries]."

This meant that "the Party" must remain the exclusive possessor of all power, the exclusive source of all decisions. "The Party" moreover had the sole right to appoint, demote or remove functionaries. As most of the leading functionaries down to the lowest levels had to be by definition Party members, under Party discipline they had to hand in their resignation the minute "the Party" so ordered.

The wishes and tendencies of the great majority of the population and those of the top leaders diverged at this point. The majority of the Soviet people would have been delighted to put an end to the totalitarian dictatorship of "the Party".

Not so the political leaders of the post-Stalin period. They wished to secure "collective leadership".

But it was not enough to pass unanimous resolutions that "Only the collective political experience, only the collective wisdom of the Central Committee . . . can guarantee correct leadership of the Party and the country", if they could not risk the implementation of this pious wish. For how could the Central Committee represent the Party membership if free elections were forbidden in the Party? And how could a committee exploit the collective experience and wisdom of its members if free debate was forbidden in it?

The rule, passed on the proposal of Lenin, was that it was a criminal action for members of the Centcom to form factions. This of course meant that on any given question there could be only one opinion. If there were two or three opinions represented by smaller or larger groups in the Centcom, these groups could be denounced as factions. In effect, this rule led to the situation in which the Politbureau, or rather the secretariat in the name of the Politbureau, presented proposals with which it was impossible to disagree. Hence the head of the secretariat was the fountain of collective wisdom, the source of all decisions. In effect he was the secretariat, the Presidium, the Central Committee. He was "the Party".

This system could be abolished only by the democratisation of the Party. Free elections on all levels of the Party would have entailed, of course, free discussion of the relative merit of the candidates. Collective leadership in the top committee would have had to be based on collective leadership in all the other committees. The Party—nearly seven million strong—would have had freedom of speech and the right to decide by majority vote.

Stalin's heirs, or at least most of them, really dreaded the emergence of a new dictator. But they never even thought of changing the Party constitution and by-laws. They rightly knew that by doing so they would *change the essence of the Soviet system*.

Instead they tried to defend themselves against the emergence of a new dictator by piecemeal personal manoeuvres. They thought in terms of personalities within the apparatus.

Malenkov could be accused of singular blindness for not

seeing that in fighting for more power for the government, he had to fight not against personalities but against the Party apparatus. But Malenkov was not blind. He would not dream of attacking the apparatus as such, since that would have led to plots, civil war, popular uprising, the end of the Soviet system. He had lost when a few days after Stalin's death he was demoted from the first secretaryship. From then on he tried to secure his position by successful work as a Prime Minister. He tried to limit the first secretary's power by personal manipulation and by forming secret factions. But the structure and essence of the apparatus—regardless of personalities—require a dictator. Any well trained and expert technician of the dictatorship—not necessarily only Khrushchev—could and would use his position as first secretary to secure his personal dictatorship. This was and is inherent in the organism of dictatorship, it was and is the logical and natural outcome of the supremacy of the Party apparatus.

In considering the further developments of the Malenkov-Khrushchev struggle for power one should not forget the background: the pressure from below. The struggle was conducted in the knowledge that the overwhelming majority of the people were against the régime. The entire structure and constitution of the régime were evolved precisely because of this fact. Just as Lenin's heirs could not dare to appeal to the people against the alarming growth of Stalin's powers, so it was with Stalin's heirs during the ascent of Khrushchev.

True enough, Khrushchev was not a Stalin. Once Stalin's heirs had summarily killed Poskrebyshv, Beriia and their associates, they seem to have discovered collectively that "one need not necessarily kill everybody". They seemed to agree wholeheartedly that Lenin's wish, "let there be no bloodshed among you leaders", should be observed. They seemed to agree that a political enemy can be liquidated without his physical destruction. They had no reason to suspect Khrushchev in this connection.

Measures were taken to safeguard the lives of the leaders. As a matter of legal form the MVD was placed under the Council of Ministers. As a matter of fact it was controlled by the Party—but *the Council of Ministers was entitled to, and did in fact, read*

the MVD reports. This meant some outside control. The MVD itself was in a new, different mood. After their recent experiences the MVD leaders could not easily be used for the fabrication of non-existent plots against leading personalities. There was always the possibility of a change at the top, and the execution of all accomplices.

In the post-Stalin political climate all the leaders, and first of all Khrushchev, realised that they had to pay attention to the limited amount of public opinion that was emerging. In addition to manoeuvres within the Kremlin, they had to try to make themselves popular with the people. Khrushchev proved to be very good at this. He travelled up and down the country making folksy, ebullient speeches, building up popularity. Other leaders also, principally Malenkov, had the right and the opportunity to play the same game of jockeying for support in the Central Committee and building up popularity.

Meanwhile Malenkov was unable to prevent Khrushchev from placing his own supporters in a series of key positions. The Party Secretaries of Moscow and of the Ukraine were already Khrushchev-men. Khrushchev removed the Party Secretaries in Azerbaidzhen (August 1953), Georgia (September), Leningrad (November), Armenia (December) and next year in Kazakhstan, Kirgizistan, Tula and Smolensk and replaced them with his own men.

The change in Leningrad was very dangerous for Malenkov. Malenkov's supporter, Adrianov, as Secretary of Leningrad, had had a hand in the exposed Leningrad purges. Khrushchev went to Leningrad to preside over the meeting which fired Adrianov and appointed Khrushchev's closest associate, Frol Kozlov, as the new Party Secretary. In the speeches at this meeting there were veiled attacks against Malenkov.

The Party Committees in the majority of the Republics and the most important provinces of Russia were now headed by Khrushchev-men. In addition to this, many other lesser posts—heads of personnel departments, Orgbureaux, etc.—were also held by his followers.

Molotov, who still outranked Khrushchev as Number Two, was at this time the closest ally of Malenkov. Moreover, as Minister of Foreign Affairs and as the oldest Bolshevik in the leadership, he wielded great power in handling international

affairs and directing liaison work with the Communist governments. Khrushchev saw to it that Party control should be re-established also in foreign affairs. By the end of July 1954 career diplomats and old Molotov-associates were one by one replaced by Khrushchev's apparatchiki. His men became ambassadors to China, Mongolia, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Important departments of the Foreign Office were also headed by Khrushchev's nominees.

In February 1954 Khrushchev felt himself strong enough openly to attack Malenkov's agricultural policy. On March 2, with a Central Committee decree, he launched his famous virgin soil campaign. Thirteen million hectares of waste and virgin land in the Volga region, in the Urals, Siberia and Northern Kazakhstan were to be opened up and sown with grain crops. Large numbers of technicians and skilled workers were immediately transferred to this region which was to benefit also from an allocation of agricultural machinery in great quantities.

Whatever its long-term aims, the immediate effect of the virgin soil programme was to sabotage Malenkov's "more consumer goods" policy. A great deal of new agricultural machinery was to be produced by heavy industry and the light and food industries had to suffer. Moreover while Malenkov had tried to solve the Soviet food problem by more intensive farming in existing areas under crop, Khrushchev now decreed a vast extension of sown acreage.

On March 13 political police work was again split. A new Committee of State Security (KGB) was set up, directly responsible to the Council of Ministers. Its head was General I. A. Serov, Khrushchev's friend and security chief since the Ukrainian days. The weakened Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) was headed by Sergey Kruglov, a Khrushchev-man. The legal supervision of these bodies was in the hands of the Procurator General, R. A. Rudenko, a former Khrushchev-man in the Ukraine!

Khrushchev very naturally exploited all possibilities of his rank as first secretary and the power of his apparatus. Most of the press and of the publishing houses in the Soviet Union were under his control. The Party organisations in the academies, scientific institutions and *in all the ministries,*

were alerted to strengthen the position and prestige of the Party.

To raise his prestige and apparent popularity, Khrushchev travelled a great deal. During 1954 he toured Kazakhstan, Siberia, Tadzhikistan, Uzbekistan and the Soviet Far East, making widely publicised speeches and consolidating his position as the driving force behind agriculture.

In March 1954 and June 1954 he represented the Soviet Party at the Polish and Czechoslovak Party Congresses. In October he headed the delegation to China and obtained Mao Tse-tung's good will and support by handing Port Arthur over to China and restoring the Sino-Soviet Joint Stock Companies to Chinese ownership. These moves, or at least their timing, clearly originated in the Khrushchev-Malenkov struggle for power. The state of that struggle was emphasised by the significant fact that Khrushchev was accompanied to China by Bulganin, Malenkov, the Premier, and Molotov, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, were left at home!

The punishment of the criminal MVD leaders of the Stalin era also reflected the power-struggle. In December 1953 the execution of Beriia and his six associates was announced. In July 1954 the execution of Ryumin and his group was made public. Their main crime was the fabrication of the Doctors' Plot. In December followed the execution of the "Abakumov-gang". General Abakumov and his associates were charged with fabricating the "Leningrad case", in which "many Party and state officials were arrested without grounds and falsely accused of very grave crimes". The Abakumov execution and the publicity given to the Leningrad case reminded people in the know that it was Malenkov who had carried out Stalin's orders in Leningrad by appearing as supreme political director of the case.

In the second part of 1954 the retreating Malenkovites fought their last rearguard actions, trying to assert the Presidium's power over the secretariat and attempting to hold up or at least to slow down the Khrushchevist publicity drive. In the Party press, Khrushchev started to appear as the authoritative Soviet spokesman on Communism, Foreign Affairs, religious questions, agriculture, industry—everything. The documentation of the Malenkovite rearguard actions would take up too much space. A few instances may suffice.

Towards the end of 1954 the Khrushchev-faction, in building up their leader's prestige and leading position, started to link his name to Stalin's. There were again tributes to Stalin, whose birthday in 1953 had passed virtually unnoticed. On the next birthday, December 21, 1954, there were leading articles about the great leader of the past. Stalin was not worshipped as before, but his cult was certainly revived and in various ways linked to the emerging Khrushchev-cult. These leading articles indicated furthermore that the open break between Malenkov and Khrushchev was imminent. *Izvestia*, the government organ, emphasised the need of increasing the production of consumer goods, whereas the Party's *Pravda* urged "the Soviet people to direct their main attention to fulfilling plans for the further growth of heavy industry". This grave violation of the monolithic unity of leadership by publicising divergent views, probably accelerated Malenkov's fall.

This could be seen from the fact that the interview which Khrushchev gave to the British scientist Bernal in September, and the publication of which was presumably long prevented by the Malenkovites, was published in full on December 24 by both *Pravda* and *Izvestia*.

In January 1955 Khrushchev, having the backing of the Party, the generals and the MVD-KGB combine, went on to full scale attack. The *Pravda* of January 24, 1955, under the editorship of Shepilov, delivered a violent attack against "some vulgarisers of Marxism" who opposed the priority of heavy industry. Next day, Khrushchev in opening the plenary session of the Central Committee went much further. He revived the brutal and uncouth language of the Stalin era:

In connection with the measures lately taken for increasing the output of consumers goods, *some comrades* have confused the question of the pace of development of heavy and light industry in our country. . . . These *pseudo-theoreticians* try to claim that at some stage of socialist construction the development of heavy industry ceases to be the main task and that light industry can and should overtake all other branches of industry. This is profoundly incorrect reasoning, *alien to the spirit of Marxism-Leninism—nothing but slander of our Party. This is a belching up of the rightist deviation, a regurgitation of views hostile to Leninism, views which Rykov, Bukharin, and their like once preached.* (Emphasis added.)

Who the "some comrades", the "pseudo-theoreticians", the "slanderers of the Party", the "belchers up" of the criminal views of Rykov and Bukharin were—was of course painfully obvious to everybody. Malenkov had said in his New Course speech in August 1953:

We *can* and therefore *must*, in the interest of securing a more rapid rise in the material and cultural standard of living of the people, force the development of light industry by all means.

From Khrushchev's speech the Soviet people learned:

1. That Malenkov was being ousted.
2. That Stalinist language, Stalinist false accusations, the Stalinist method of putting an ideological smoke-screen around personal intrigues was being revived.
3. That to demand a rise in the material and cultural standard of living—extremely low in both cases—was a criminal rightist deviation, a slandering of the Party.

. . . On February 8, 1955, the Supreme Soviet heard and accepted Malenkov's resignation from the post of Chairman of the Council of Ministers, and elected Khrushchev's friend and travelling partner, Bulganin, as his successor.

Malenkov's letter of resignation—like all Soviet false confessions of cooked-up charges—was written in the style of his liquidator. Malenkov was then fifty-two years old. Since 1934 he had been doing leading Party work. Since 1939 he had been a member of the Central Committee and since 1946 of the Politbureau. During the war he was one of the five rulers of the Soviet Union. He directed the Stalingrad operations. For special services in armament production he was awarded in 1943 the title of Hero of Socialist Labour. He twice received the Order of Lenin "for outstanding services to the Communist Party and the Soviet people".

The letter of resignation which he was forced to sign admitted: "lack of experience in State work"; "insufficient experience in local work"; "lack of direct experience in guiding individual branches of the economy"; "*guilt and responsibility for the unsatisfactory state of affairs in agriculture*". (Agriculture had of course been Khrushchev's domain for many years.) In this letter Malenkov praised the new Khrushchevite agricultural reforms which were:

based upon the only correct foundation—the further all-round development of heavy industry—and only the realisation of this programme will provide the necessary conditions for a real increase in the production of all necessary consumers' goods.

The single and very significant break with Stalinist practice was that this admitted slanderer of the Party and right deviationist did not have to confess to being a life-long rabid enemy of Communism and a spy and imperialist agent. He was merely demoted to the post of Minister of Power Stations and Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers. He remained a member of the Party Presidium.

The reason for the break in Stalinist practice and the method by which the ludicrous confession was extorted, can be fathomed from this part of Malenkov's resignation:

In the new sectors entrusted to me I will, *under the guidance of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, monolithic in its unity and solidarity*, and of the Soviet government, perform in the most conscientious manner my duty and the functions which will be entrusted to me.

It was guaranteed to Malenkov that by making his false confession, he would retain his leading position. Members of the Presidium are officially "leaders of the Party". His retention would prove to the outside world that Stalin's murderous dictatorship was truly a thing of the past and that the régime was "monolithic".

The new Premier, Bulganin, promised that the Council of Ministers would "*first of all carry out undeviatingly the policy drafted by the Communist Party*".

The apparatus, headed by Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev, was victorious in principle. But the Presidium, the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers were not yet cleansed from old Bolsheviks, from technocrats, intellectuals and "their like". Their ousting in well-calculated batches was the task of the next period.

IX

KHRUSHCHEV IS DENIED THE RIGHT TO CARRY OUT PURGES

DURING the months preceding his ousting of Malenkov, Khrushchev used his press control to link his name to that of Stalin. Some of his immediate supporters started to accord to him the rank: *the closest comrade-in-arms* of Stalin. In proposing Bulganin for the Premiership to the Supreme Soviet, Khrushchev said:

Worthy disciple of the great Lenin, and one of the closest comrades-in-arms of the continuer of Lenin's cause—Josip Vissarionovich Stalin—Comrade Bulganin is an outstanding Party and State leader.

It was even more alarming that in his anti-Malenkov speech Khrushchev should have revived Stalin's style characteristic of the period of the great purges. The Presidium members—and as matter of fact every inhabitant of the USSR—had good cause to fear that if Khrushchev attained unlimited power, he would return to the Stalinist blood-purges. The phrase "belching up rightist deviation" was used by Stalin against his opponents after Kirov's murder. In 1937 when demanding their execution, he reminded the Party leadership that they "belched up right deviation". Khrushchev's use of this and other purge phrases like "slanderer of the Party", holder of "views hostile to Leninism", and the fact that he linked these views to the executed Rykov and Bukharin—had a most sinister significance. In the Stalin period a slight change in some ceremonial formulation often heralded the execution of scores of people. Now, so soon after Stalin's death, Khrushchev did more than make a slight verbal change: he delivered an open threat.

Equally alarming was that Khrushchev in attempting to become "the Stalin of today", would claim for himself also Stalin's ideological infallibility. Stalin was for decades the only authorised spokesman of Marxism-Leninism. He alone could

and did decide which views were Communist and which not. Those who deviated from Stalin's line on any subject, even *before* that line was enunciated, could easily become anti-Party heretics and candidates for execution. This situation was the cause of a great many senseless failures in Soviet politics, economy and cultural life. The realities of a situation, real problems, real difficulties, facts—everything had to be disregarded for fear of ideological deviation. The scientists, the various experts in economics and commerce knew in Stalin's day that having the fact of the matter on their side, was no defence at all. Stalin or his lieutenants could brand them as "bourgeois factologists". Infallibility in ideology—in the last analysis—was also a threatening sign that the purges could reappear.

His impatience to become "the Stalin of today", united temporarily all the anti-Khrushchev personalities and alarmed many of his supporters. There is only indirect documentation for what happened immediately afterwards. *It was made clear to Khrushchev by his opponents and supporters alike, that they would oust him the very minute he tried to threaten or carry out purges.* During Stalin's rule the special Poskrebyshev-force, and the unfrightened, uncontrolled MVD made his ousting by united effort impossible. Khrushchev had no private political police, and the MVD had been sufficiently warned by the fate of Beriya, Abakumov and the others, not to help in rigged trials against leading personalities. *The Party apparatus supported Khrushchev only as long as he did not endanger the life of every apparatchik.* A return to purges would have meant exactly that.

In the Soviet system the appearance of harmony and monolithic unity is to be preserved at almost any price, hence it was astonishing to see public manifestations of the struggle against Khrushchev. As the various anti-Khrushchev moves were made through official Party publications, it was evident that the majority of the Presidium and Central Committee opposed his full dictatorship, and that even his very own Centcom secretariat was not "firmly united" around him.

Malenkov was deposed in February. The first sign of the manoeuvres to limit Khrushchev's powers was found in the official *Encyclopedic Dictionary*, published at the end of March 1955. In comparison with the previous edition, there were two

changes in the biographical article on Stalin: it was now emphasised that Stalin ceased to be General Secretary of the Party at the Nineteenth Congress in October 1952 "*and subsequently until the end of his life was secretary of the Central Committee*".

This was a clear statement that in 1952 the General Secretaryship was abolished, hence Khrushchev did not inherit Stalin's former powers. Khrushchev was just Secretary, not General Secretary. The other change was also significant. Since Stalin's death the ceremonial list of those leaders who contributed to victory in the second world war had contained the following names: Malenkov, Molotov, Khrushchev, Voroshilov, Bulganin, Kaganovich and Mikoyan. During 1954 Khrushchev succeeded several times in publishing a new list in which only Khrushchev, Zhdanov, Bulganin and Shcherbakov figured. As Zhdanov and Shcherbakov were dead, it was clear that Khrushchev wanted to oust all the others and wanted to make Bulganin his second-in-command. But now, the March 1955 *Encyclopedic Dictionary* gave a new list. In this, only the former members of Stalin's State Defence Committee were enumerated, that is the seven leading members of the Presidium with the exception of Khrushchev, the only leader who was never on the Defence Committee!

This may seem insignificant to outsiders, but in the Soviet world of status-seekers, in which it is most important for everybody to have correct information concerning the power-situation at any moment the meaning was both clear and portentous.

The significance of these symptoms was made sufficiently clear by two stern warnings to Khrushchev—both coming from the top of the Party apparatus. He was warned by *Pravda* and by the Party's theoretical periodical, the *Kommunist*, that according to Lenin the secretary is nothing more than the executor of the Central Committee decisions.

The *Kommunist's* task is to provide Party functionaries with proper guidance in Communist practice and theory. It lays down the current Party line. And in the April 1955 issue it was stated:

Lenin noted several times the significance of collectivity in the direction of the Party and the country. "It must be emphasised from the very outset so as to remove all misunderstandings"—

V. I. Lenin said in the report of the Central Committee to the Ninth Party Congress—"that only the collective decisions of the Central Committee adopted in the Orgbureau, or Politbureau, or in the Plenum of the Central Committee, *exclusively such matters were carried out by the secretary of the Central Committee.*" (Emphasis added.)

And though Shepilov, the editor of *Pravda*, proved to be for a long time yet to come a Khrushchev-man, at this stage he published in *Pravda* of April 20 a further warning to Khrushchev. The author of this article was G. I. Petrovsky, an old Bolshevik and former Politbureau member who had been purged by Khrushchev in 1938 in the Ukraine, and rehabilitated by Beriya in 1953. Petrovsky wrote the Lenin anniversary birthday article. He reminisced about the great leader whom he had often met. But it was obvious that the real reason for the article was this sentence:

Lenin taught us collectivity of work, frequently reminding us that all Politbureau members are equal and that *the secretary is chosen for fulfilment of decisions of the Central Committee.* (Emphasis added.)

For the Soviet public this gave a clear picture of the Kremlin situation. That all Politbureau members are equal was very important for all the members of the Presidium with the exception of Khrushchev who wanted to be its head. The publication of this sentence in *Pravda* showed that the majority of the Presidium had succeeded in overruling the first secretary.

The demonstration of the united front against him at the slightest sign of any attempt to stage Stalinist purges, undoubtedly caused Khrushchev to make binding promises. His opponents and supporters—whether they trusted the promises or not—were reassured by the fact that such a united front had come into being. And as we shall see a little later, they took a very grave step—a step which soon shook the entire world of Communism—to stop Khrushchev from a revival of full Stalinism: they decided to make their peace with Tito and manoeuvred Khrushchev into making this step.

Since anti-Stalin sentiment was growing at this time in the USSR and the satellite empire, Khrushchev had to retreat from

Stalinism! During the subsequent months, and even years, before arriving at full power (minus the right to carry out purges), he could not afford a consistent line on any of the major problems of internal and external affairs. Too fervent de-Stalinisation was most dangerous for his personal rule, yet he could not appear as a rigid pro-Stalinist for fear of becoming a target of the de-Stalinisators. He improvised and changed sides constantly. If his position could be defended or bettered by temporarily joining the Molotov-Kaganovich-Suslov faction of Stalinists, he did so. At other times it was expedient to support anti-Stalinists like Malenkov and Mikoyan. Similarly he had to waver between the bureaucrats and anti-bureaucrats, between the centralisers and the advocates of de-centralisation. Concessions to the technocrats were followed by concessions to his own verbocrats in the Party apparatus. He had to appear at times as an adherent of international relaxation, at other times his position was improved by sudden support given to the advocates of rigidity. His wavering between the Titoist and anti-Titoist forces is well known. The chronicle of the Twentieth Congress will show that even the making of his fateful anti-Stalin speech was a last minute improvisation. At the beginning of the Congress he had no wish to denounce the dead dictator.

All through his decades in the apparatus, Khrushchev excelled as a technician and organiser of Party dictatorship. His strength was that within the Communist framework he was no fanatic. He held no strong convictions about any problem or aspect of theory or practice. Being a pragmatist, he cared for effective apparatus-gains, not minding with what *verbal concessions* he could achieve them. He did not want to be consequent or right, he wanted to survive in his position. In this he was only continuing Stalin's practice.

During the decades of the Stalin era Khrushchev had to control his quick temper, his sudden rages, his habit of making imprudent remarks. With his ascendancy he thought that he could discard some of this rigid self-control. He thought his position secure enough to behave "naturally". Now he again had to make concessions in manners. And what is far more important, he had to accelerate and widen his intrigues and manoeuvres to undermine the power of his enemies. He had

to gain new allies and bind his existing allies to himself with stronger ties.

It is highly probable that it was a tactical measure to gain stronger support in the army leadership, when Khrushchev at this time managed to allocate much more funds, materials, equipment, foreign currency and many more scientists to the various programmes of the army. A month after Malenkov was ousted Khrushchev arranged the creation of six new Marshals of the Soviet Union. Of these S. A. Grechko had been a member of the Ukrainian Politbureau under Khrushchev. Another, K. S. Moskalenko, owed his promotion to the role he played as commander of the Moscow garrison at the time of Beriya's arrest.

Significantly, the Warsaw military pact of the USSR and its seven European satellites was signed on May 11, 1955. A joint military command was formed headed by Marshal Konev (a Khrushchev-associate) with headquarters in Moscow. As other military events and frontier tensions were staged by Khrushchev later as a pretext for furthering various manoeuvres in internal affairs, it is also likely that the timing of the Warsaw pact was a further move to get the backing of the generals.

Among the planners and technocrats Khrushchev gave more support to the adherents of heavy industry. He promised and gave help to the opponents of bureaucracy and over-centralisation. With the exception of Malenkov's more consumer goods policy (and of intensive agriculture) he took over as his own, most of Malenkov's New Course programme. To many of Malenkov's adherents and to other technocrats the decentralisation policy instituted by Khrushchev, looked like the realisation of their aims. The *Gosplan*, the State Planning Commission, was given the task of laying down overall plans but the various republic governments were given greatly increased authority to plan the details, to fix production targets for given areas and localities. In May, *Gosplan* became responsible for long term planning and a new State Economic Commission (*Goskom*) for short term planning. These tremendous bureaucratic reorganisations gave Khrushchev a chance through his Party-personnel departments to destroy the bureaucratic empires of his rivals and build a new empire for himself. But many government leaders and technocrats saw in these reorganisations a victory

of their own line only, and became temporary Khrushchev-supporters.

But all those leaders who opposed and dreaded a return to terroristic dictatorship were engaged since the demotion of Malenkov in far more important political moves behind the scenes—the renouncing of Tito's guilt, and by doing so to effectively bar anyone's way from becoming "the Stalin of today".

The denunciation of Tito as an enemy of Communism, a traitor to the working class of the world and agent of imperialism was in the core of Stalinism. The 1948 Warsaw declaration of the Cominform published this denunciation as a unanimous decision of the Communist Parties of the USSR and of all the satellites. Mao Tse-tung in person and the Chinese Central Committee wholeheartedly endorsed this decision. The most extreme anti-Titoist campaign was waged for five years. There was no Communist leader in the Sino-Soviet orbit, or in the Communist parties in the neutral and the Western world, who did not call Tito a chained dog of the imperialists. Anti-Titoism became an integral part of international Communist theory and Party practice.

In the satellites thousands and thousands of Communists were executed for Titoism. Popular Communist leaders with long and immaculate Party records were executed in a series of rigged trials. In Bulgaria, Traicho Kostov, who had spent eighteen years in various jails for his Communist convictions and activities, was executed after a show trial which could not even produce his confession. In Hungary, Laszlo Rajk, of Spanish Civil War fame, was hanged with many members of the Communist Old Guard. In Czechoslovakia, Slansky and scores of other old Bolsheviks were executed. In Poland, Gomułka was arrested, kept in jail for years, but was not brought to trial. In Roumania and Albania, everywhere Communist leaders were appointed by Stalin's General Bielkin and the local Stalins to play the role of Titoist conspirators. Each main trial was followed by dozens, even scores of "connected trials". In the satellite empire thousands upon thousands were executed and tens of thousands jailed because of their—mostly non-existent—connection with Tito and the Yugoslav Communists.

The rehabilitation of Tito was sure to have the following consequences:

1. The myth of Stalin's infallibility and that of all the other Party leaders and Central Committees would be badly damaged.

2. The admission, so soon after the humiliation of the MVD in the USSR, that thousands of innocent people had been executed by various security police forces would be a reminder and a *repeated lesson* that this organ of terroristic dictatorship constituted a deadly danger to every inhabitant of the Communist world.

3. People would be convinced that everything must be done to make a return to the theory of infallibility and to terroristic dictatorship impossible.

4. The consequent release and rehabilitation of the surviving "Titoists" in the satellite empire, would be a further shock to the Stalinist dictatorships in those countries.

5. This step would widen and accelerate the anti-Stalin thaw everywhere in the Soviet world.

... The prudent Party-men, the conservatives like Molotov, Kaganovich and Voroshilov were against this move. Khrushchev's entire past record indicates that he agreed with them. The rehabilitation of Tito would clearly weaken the position of all Party leaders, especially of the one who personally undertook the step. It was probably for this reason that Khrushchev was given the role by the Presidium. Molotov, Kaganovich and Voroshilov were probably won over to this move by the following argument: If Tito's rehabilitation proved as fatal as they expected, it would be easy to make Khrushchev responsible for it and by doing so, remove him from the leadership. Many of Khrushchev's own apparatchiki were violently against the rehabilitation of Tito. If Khrushchev went to Belgrade to make this move, these apparatchiki would also turn against Khrushchev.

Apart from the power-struggle reasons for this move, there were also many objective reasons. Tito's rehabilitation, so it was argued, would consolidate the ranks of international Communism. It was in the line of general relaxation. It would prove to the Western governments, that the present Kremlin

leaders wanted to liquidate Stalinist practices. It would satisfy the Party and non-Party intellectuals, all those who wanted to "rejuvenate Communism", by demolishing the Stalinist edifice of lies.

Khrushchev was at first reluctant to undertake the journey. But the dangers to his position were counterbalanced by the chance to appear again as the leader of a most important delegation, by the fact that he would appear in an anti-Stalinist, liberal light to the non-initiated; his popularity in the country would grow and his opponents would feel reassured for a time. It was on the eve of his Belgrade trip that he was permitted to have a slight, but important advancement. On May 19, a few days before his Belgrade trip, a *Pravda* editorial referred to him for the first time as *First Secretary*. Up till then he had been just first secretary. A few days later this was toned down and from then on he was *First secretary*.

Whatever were the reasons and the intrigues behind the scenes, on May 26, 1955, a delegation headed by Khrushchev, with the participation of Bulganin, Mikoyan and Shepilov left for Belgrade.

It was stated in some quarters at the time, that Khrushchev was chosen for this role because he had not taken part in the anti-Tito drive. This is mistaken. Many times in the 1948-52 period he called Tito a chained dog of imperialism. The set of adjectives were prescribed by Stalin. All the Party secretaries in their routine policy-reports on internal and external affairs had to accord a longish section to the ideological and practical consequences of the Titoist heresy. In the Ukraine, a non-Russian republic, the Titoist deviation was even more dangerous. Khrushchev fulminated in scores of speeches against the "Titoist gangsters". Two examples:

Selling out to the American imperialists Judas Tito and his clique turned Yugoslavia into a concentration camp. . . . The people of Yugoslavia rise up to struggle against the Fascist clique of Tito. This chained dog of imperialism will not escape the stern judgment of the people of Yugoslavia for all his hideous crimes. (Speech in the Ukraine, *Pravda Ukrainy*, October 30, 1949.)

The Tito-Rankovich band of murderers and spies . . . completed the transition from nationalism to Fascism. (Article in honour of Stalin's 70th birthday, *Pravda*, December 21, 1949.)

The Soviet visit to Belgrade was a great victory for Tito and a humiliation for Khrushchev and the Soviet leaders. Tito and his staff listened coldly as Khrushchev attempted to lay the blame for the break with Yugoslavia on such "imperialist agents and spies" as Beriya and Abakumov, who had since been executed. And although Khrushchev spoke about the "re-establishment of mutual understanding" between the Soviet and Yugoslav Communist Parties, the Yugoslav leaders confined the talks and the joint declaration to purely governmental matters. All the concessions were made by the Soviet delegation. *By recognising the right of countries to pursue different roads to socialism*, the Soviet CP seemed to renounce ideological control over all the other Communist Parties. The wording was sufficiently vague to make different interpretations possible, and verbal retreats were soon made by the Kremlin from the "different roads" principle. But it nevertheless proved to be one of the antecedents of Gomulkaism and of the revolution in Hungary.

The number of historical and theoretical works and Party textbooks which had to be withdrawn from circulation in the Communist orbit because of this change in the Party line, ran to *millions*.

After the Belgrade visit, Khrushchev went on to Sofia and then to Bucharest where he had to instruct and reassure the alarmed Communist dictators of the satellite countries. Khrushchev had strengthened these dictators by his ousting of Malenkov; now he made their position most precarious. The pendulum movement in the Soviet Union between Stalinism and anti-Stalinism could not be perfectly synchronised with a similar movement in the various satellites. The Bulgarian, Roumanian, Hungarian and other Communist leaders had done everything to model their régimes on Russia. The study of the Russian language was enforced. And now their rebellious intellectuals could quote Russian Party publications against them. More relaxed and de-Stalinised periods in Russia clashed with re-Stalinisation moves in the satellites. All this made the ferment more intensive and an explosion more possible if not probable.

During the next period until the bloodless purging of Malenkov, Molotov, Kaganovich and their associates in 1957,

an uneasy and uncertain balance of power seemed to exist in the Kremlin. That something like a collective leadership was managing to survive was attested by the fact that the Party, the government and the press did not speak with one voice. Symptoms of divergent views and of opposing factions could be seen in the press almost every week. *Izvestia* and *Pravda*, *Kommunist* and *Partiinaya Zhizn* disagreed on questions of practical policy and of ideology. In various books and Party pamphlets the esoteric debate went on concerning the relative power of the Centcom Presidium and the Centcom Secretariat. Purges of MVD officers in the republics were published only in the local press, not in the central.

Khrushchev went on patiently to make the organisation of the Party apparatus stronger, to enlarge the secretariats at all levels with his own supporters. The prestige and position of the apparatus had suffered from every move aiming at internal and international relaxation and every retreat from Stalinist dogma. In every Communist country the Party apparatus thrives on tension. The greater the tension, the more discipline and vigilance can be demanded from everybody. In times of relaxation people are not intimidated and the iron rule of the apparatchiki is endangered. For these reasons the Soviet apparatchiki were in the mood of the inhabitants of a beleaguered fortress and rallied around their commandant. (As long as he does not attempt to purge them, this reaction must be regarded as normal!)

The opposing fronts in this Stalinist-anti-Stalinist tug-o'-war were not well defined, and in many respects not even organised. Individuals, members of professions, politicians, often took sides instinctively. But all the struggles within the struggles were concerned, in the last analysis, with one single question: was a new Stalin to emerge or not?

Khrushchev (and Bulganin) gained in prestige during this period by their many and long travels abroad. But the fact that the head of the Party and the head of the government were absent for months from the seat of the government could also mean many things. It could mean that the Cabinet of Deputy Premiers and the Presidium were governing without them. It could also mean that in both Cabinet and Presidium there was a temporary balance of power between the factions supporting

and opposing the Khrushchev-Bulganin duumvirate. The latter strengthened their position in July 1955 when the Presidium was enlarged by Kirichenko (Khrushchev-man) and Suslov ("Stalinist") and the Secretariat by Aristov, Belyayev and Shepilov, all three more or less Khrushchev supporters. Moreover, the two leaders had now a middle-of-the-road position between the leading anti-Stalinists (Malenkov and Mikoyan) and the conservative Stalinists (Molotov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov). The fight between the two factions of their opponents, made their position more secure. In the general political and intellectual atmosphere on the other hand, Khrushchev's position was weakened by the growing force of anti-Stalinism.

The relaxation in intellectual spheres had to go on to appease the scientists, more influential and powerful in the age of nuclear physics and electronics than ever before. (At the beginning of 1955 it was repeatedly announced that Soviet production of A- and H-bombs had surpassed that of the Americans.) In the July 2, 1954, issue of *Pravda* the academician Sobolev had already attacked the "cult of personality" (dogmatic infallibility) in the sciences. He wrote:

It is important not that we should reveal what does or does not correspond to definite dogmas, but that we should test ideas and theories in practice . . . and boldly develop theory on the basis of scientific generalisations of the achievements of practice.

In the April 20, 1955, issue of *Pravda* one of the arch-devils of Soviet scientific demonology, Albert Einstein, was rehabilitated on the occasion of his death. The memoir, signed by a group of prominent scientists, acknowledged Einstein's tremendous achievements. For decades his theory of relativity had been referred to as a "*cul-de-sac of contemporary physics*", and Einstein was called an "idealistic babblers". *Kommunist* enunciated that Soviet science did not reject but critically assimilated all that was valuable in the achievements of capitalist science. It condemned the prejudice of "some Soviet scientists" who held that capitalist science was incapable of creating anything of value.

These ideological retreats and rehabilitations of Western scientists were of course weakening the principle of Party direction of science, literature and the arts. The thaw received new encouragement.

The relaxation in foreign affairs also went on. On May 15, 1955, the Austrian State Treaty was signed, although for years the Soviet had insisted that the Austrian Treaty be tied to a settlement in Germany. In July, Khrushchev and Bulganin went to the Heads of Governments meeting in Geneva. The "Geneva spirit" produced very few results apart from an undertaking which led to the ending of the war in Indo-China. In September the Finno-Soviet Treaty was signed. The Porkkala naval base, acquired as a result of the Soviet attack on Finland, was returned to that country. All these moves were intended to demonstrate the reality of the Soviet New Look.

In the second part of 1955 all the warring factions were preparing for the Twentieth Party Congress next year, the first Congress after Stalin's death. In the autumn K. and B.—as they were referred to in this period—temporarily joined the anti-Stalinists against the Stalinist faction. Molotov and Kaganovich had become too popular in the apparatus for Khrushchev's liking. These two leaders represented the interests of the apparatus in the ideological and political sphere more consistently than the First Secretary.

Molotov was soon to go to the Foreign Ministers' Conference in Geneva. This time was chosen to weaken his prestige. The October 8 issue of *Kommunist* published Molotov's letter in which he admitted that at the February 8 session of the Supreme Soviet he made an "incorrect formulation" and a "theoretically mistaken and politically harmful statement". The grave mistake committed eight months previously was that he had described the USSR as a country where "the *foundations* of a Socialist society had been established". The editorial in the same issue of *Kommunist* emphasised:

The theoretical bankruptcy and the political harm of efforts to carry over to the contemporary period formulas and descriptions relating to a stage which was passed through long ago—to present the matter as though only the foundations of socialism have been built in our country . . . [this] can do our cause harm, since it *distorts the perspective of development and leads to an under-estimation* of the socialist system's forces and potentialities.

In the speech in question Molotov had argued implicitly against too much relaxation and emphasised the dangers of the

international situation. No one had rectified him then. His humiliation eight months later was a victory for the combined Khrushchevist and anti-Stalinist forces. K. and B. could safely embark upon their long tour of India, Burma and Afghanistan in November and December 1955.

This tour necessitated a further retreat from Stalinist and international Communist dogma. Hundreds of Party textbooks and other ideological publications had to be withdrawn, an entire volume of the *Bolshaya Sovetskaya Encyclopedia* had to be destroyed and written anew to conform with the new line. The main points of the old line were: 1. The British imperialists and their lackeys in the Labour Party had changed only the form of their colonial rule in India in 1947 with the *fake-independence* move. 2. The British Dominions are colonies. 3. The Indian leaders, Nehru and Gandhi, are lackeys and accomplices of the imperialists. 4. Only Communist-lead revolutions can lead to real independence.

After the verbal acceptance of the "different roads to socialism" principle, many Marxist-Leninist dogmas—held for decades—had now been discarded. For the Communist and non-Communist intellectuals in the Sino-Soviet orbit these ideological retreats were further victories over the principle of the Party leaders' infallibility. New and large breaches were inflicted on the already badly battered edifice of Stalinist dogma.

To counterbalance these concessions and to offer some appeasement to the Soviet and Chinese Stalinists, Khrushchev made virulent attacks against the imperialists. On December 4, 1955, for example he said in a speech in Mandalay:

The colonisers who lorded it in your country retarded your development. We Europeans feel ashamed for these Europeans who oppressed you, who plundered you. Yet, not all Europeans think and act as colonisers who consider that their white skin gives them the right to dominate those with black skins.

Speaking in Rangoon two days later he denounced Britain, France and the United States for their part in feeding "the Hitlerite bloodhound to be set against Russia". He also said that the British regarded the Burmese as savages and barbarians and accused the British of stealing "the last piece of bread from the people".

The offers of disinterested help with no strings attached were coupled with concessions to the nationalistic and religious feelings of Indians and Burmese. K. and B. donned Gandhi-caps, although Gandhi was, according to Soviet texts, "the petty bourgeois demagogue who misled the people by exploiting their backward, religious feelings". Khrushchev, the author of the post-Stalin anti-religious decree in the Soviet Union and the "principled opponent" of Ukrainian and other nationalisms, now demonstrated the verbocrat's ability to make friends and influence people.

X

WHO EXPOSES WHOM?

How Khrushchev was forced to expose Stalin

ON the night of February 24-25, 1956, "the pride of progressive humanity", "the greatest leader of all ages and peoples" was called by Khrushchev in the name of the Central Committee a sadist, a mass-murderer, a coward, a military bungler, a falsifier of history. This was not only the second death of Stalin. The speech annihilated large stretches of Soviet and Party history, covering nearly four decades. The Stalinist theoretical edifice—already badly battered—was overthrown with a crash similar in resonance to that when the Budapest workers smote down the great dictator's steel statue. The party was left without a creed and without a past.

It is difficult to imagine that the Kremlin leaders will ever have to consider a step even approximately as complex, difficult and fateful as this. How and when did they consider it? How and when did Khrushchev decide to attach his name to it? Who were the authors of this most damning indictment?

There is no need to stress the importance of the answers to these questions. More than anything else, these answers throw light on the political atmosphere of the Kremlin and the political personality of Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev.

The anti-Stalin movement of the people had been growing steadily in force and scope during the three years since the dictator's death. This movement was far less concerned with an exposure of past crimes, than with as complete a break with Stalinist practices as is humanly possible in the Soviet system.

Stalin's heirs did not want to defend and preserve the Stalin myth in its entirety. Even the die-hard Stalinists led by Molotov, Kaganovich and Voroshilov were prepared to make some concessions, as long as Stalinist dictatorship (minus the bloody purges) was preserved intact. The middle-road apparatchik faction led by Khrushchev, was all along against too far reaching anti-Stalinisation. They feared that

Party dictatorship would suffer. During the three years of the post-Stalin era, Khrushchev himself alternated between linking his name to the Stalin myth and between distancing himself from it. Mikoyan and Malenkov (by now probably in this order) wanted to destroy the Stalin myth.

The immediately published part of the Twentieth Party Congress deliberations showed that all the main Kremlin factions won certain victories and suffered certain defeats.

The arrangement was such that the eleven Presidium members—the official leaders of the Party—were elected six months previously, at the July 1955 session of the Central Committee. The Congress—packed by a Khrushchevite majority—could not demote any of the Presidium members, not even two such publicly humiliated figures as Malenkov and Molotov. There can be no doubt whatsoever that Khrushchev had an absolute majority at the Congress. Its whole tone, the resolutions, the election of the new Khrushchevite Central Committee prove this. The Soviet press in reporting the protocol-determined applause, made the power-position quite clear:

Khrushchev: Tempestuous, prolonged applause developing into an ovation, all rise; Bulganin: Continued, long-lasting applause, all rise; Mikoyan: Tempestuous, long lasting applause; Voroshilov, Molotov, Malenkov and Suslov: Tempestuous, continued applause; Kaganovich and Pervukhin: Tempestuous applause; Kirichenko: Continued applause; Saburov: Applause.

Mikoyan, now third in rank was not accorded by Khrushchev the “all rise” distinction, but according to trustworthy reports the delegates deviated from instructions by applauding him for at least as long as Khrushchev.

The Congress indicated both that Khrushchev was the leader of “collective leadership” and that his power and freedom of manoeuvre were limited by some factor or factors.

As recently as September 1955 there had been no majority decision to make any major attack on the Stalin myth. Khrushchev, as head of the apparatus, took a step which proves that at that time he wanted to keep the Stalin image intact. The Stalinist Bible of Party education the world over, and first of all in the USSR, *The Short Course of the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolshevik)* was republished in 200,000

copies. The new printing was made from the 1945 matrices. Copies 500,000-700,000 were passed for printing by the Party on September 29, 1955.

Had Khrushchev known that in less than six months circumstances would force him to denounce its contents, he would have done everything to prevent republication. In fact, he ordered it.

All through 1955 the various instructions to agitators and Agit-prop departments, centrally printed pamphlets for Party seminars, the publications of the Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin Institute, the work of historians of the Party (as opposed to academic historians) contained no hint that Khrushchev's secretariat, which issued the instructions and censored the texts, wanted to prepare the Party membership for a violent anti-Stalin turn. The various Stalinist doctrines and expressions which Khrushchev violently attacked in his anti-Stalin speech, were officially taught throughout the USSR. The "mistaken and harmful theory" that with the strengthening of Socialism the class-war becomes more violent, was taught. Innocent functionaries done to death were still called "enemies of the people", and Stalin was "*vozhd*", leader, the nearest equivalent to the German "*Führer*" or the Italian "*Il Duce*".

On the anniversary of Stalin's birth, December 21, 1955, the entire Soviet press published photographs and/or editorials praising Stalin. Even *Izvestia*, the government organ, alone free from both Party control and official MVD censorship, called Stalin on this occasion "a great revolutionary and profound thinker" and went on to say:

Stalin's name is close and dear to millions of toilers in all corners of the earth. Stalin—was a great fighter for the peace and security of the peoples. *In millions of hearts burns the inextinguishable flame of his word.* (Emphasis added.)

The secret decision of the Presidium to take a strong anti-Stalin turn was taken during the second part of January 1956, less than three weeks before the official opening of the Party Congress. The main reason for this decision was the fact that Khrushchev had again made too strong a bid for leadership. Before the All-Union Party Congress, the republics held their own congresses to choose delegates. On January 23-25 in two

republics where the Party leadership consisted of Khrushchev's closest associates—in the Ukraine and in Kazakhstan—Khrushchev was accorded the rank: "head of the Presidium".

The first secretaries, the Agit-prop chiefs and all the speakers at the Ukrainian and Kazakh republic congresses applied the stereotyped phrases of the Stalin cult to Khrushchev. "Sincere thanks" were expressed by representatives of industry, agriculture and science "to the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU and *personally to Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev* for rendering aid to the construction and organisation of our sovkhoses" (or our industry, our scientific work, etc.) . . . "The Central Committee and *Comrade Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev personally* attach exceptional significance to organisational work. . . ." The greetings from these Congresses and the speeches delivered were printed in the January 24-27 issues of *Pravda Ukrainy* and *Kazakhstan Pravda*. All speakers spoke in tones of adulation about Khrushchev unheard since Stalin's death.

Two Ukrainian members of the Soviet Central Committee, the first secretary Kirichenko and the leading Ukrainian writer-politician, Alexander Korneichuk, not only called Khrushchev repeatedly the head of the Presidium but emphasised his role as the leader and organiser of all activities of the Party and the government. The Ukrainian and Kazakh Khrushchevites, among them many delegates to the coming Twentieth Congress and members of the Soviet Central Committee, gave a clear indication *what sort of Khrushchev cult they intend to initiate at the coming Congress*. The suddenness and the simultaneity of this new bid for leadership in two republics separated by an enormous distance, showed of course that the move was centrally directed by Khrushchev.

The Ukrainian Congress was told moreover that Khrushchev had obtained Mao Tse-tung's backing for his assumption of Stalin's power and infallibility. Said Soviet Centcom member Korneichuk:

I am convinced that I express your enthusiastic feelings, dear comrade delegates, when I say that in all our achievements there is part of *the spirit of the fervent heart of our friend and leader Comrade Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev*, who for many years taught us in the Ukraine not to become separated from the people . . . I will never forget my encounter with the great leader of the Chinese

people, *Comrade Mao Tse-tung* [who] with simple words, with fervent feelings of fraternity, asked us to convey great, as he said *great, great greetings to the Soviet people, to Comrade Khrushchev, sincere thanks for the aid to the people of China.* (Tumultuous, continued applause, all rise.) (Emphasis added.)

Khrushchev made it drastically clear to his colleagues in the Presidium that he intended to end collective leadership and that at the coming Twentieth Congress he meant to assume Stalin's mantle. These leaders knew by this time that one of the chief Party propagandists, V. P. Moskovsky, had written a pamphlet entitled *The Party and The People*. In this seventy-two page Party pamphlet, finally published on February 3, 1956, Khrushchev was mentioned thirty-eight times. The pamphlet set out to demonstrate one "fact" only—that Khrushchev enjoyed tremendous popularity among all the peoples of the Soviet Union—that he enjoyed full backing of the overwhelming majority of Party and non-Party people.

As to what was the reaction to these Khrushchev-moves in the secret conclaves of the Kremlin, we have no direct information. Indirect information however found its way into the Soviet press, and some other pertinent facts can be reconstructed with a bit of "archaeological exploration".

As was by now usual on such occasions, Khrushchev by overplaying his hand united all factions of his rivals, alarmed the army, and lost temporarily some of his supporters in the central Party apparatus.

In considering the various moves and symptoms it should be borne in mind that leading members of the Presidium, of the government and of the army always do everything to keep themselves informed about the plans for overt and covert moves. The confidential instructions given out to the speakers at the various republican congresses cannot be kept secret. Khrushchev's rivals must have had a warning at least a week before the event.

They too made their moves to influence the 1,355 delegates and the eighty-one delegates who had the right to speak but not to vote at the Twentieth Congress.

One was the historians' conference held in Moscow from January 25 to 28, 1956. The pretext of the conference was a consultation with "the readers of the periodical *Voprosi Istorii*

(Questions of History)". More than 600 historians attended this conference at which there was an open clash between the academic historians and the apparatchik-historians. The academic or professional historians had played a leading part in the intellectual anti-Stalinist ferment since the dictator's death. One of the first Stalinist purges had been directed against historians and each purge throughout the monster-period took a large toll among the historians. The report on the conference was to be published in the next issue of *Questions of History* on February 10, a few days before the opening of the Congress. The fact that the issue was passed for publication only on February 13, indicated that there must have been disagreement about the publication.

For at this conference the very same warnings were issued to Khrushchev with which Mikoyan came out later at the Congress. The deputy editor-in-chief of *Questions of History*, Burdzhakov, in his co-report to the conference made a detailed attack against the falsification in Soviet history. In the censored report of the conference published in mid-February the attack was toned down.

Burdzhakov said that the history of the factional struggle in the first two decades after the revolution was presented as the Party's fight against a handful of "unmasked spies and wreckers". The correct description, according to Burdzhakov was: "fight against anti-Leninist tendencies and groups supported by backward social strata". Burdzhakov singled out the falsifications of the histories of the *Ukrainian and Transcaucasian Party organisations*. This of course was an implicit attack on Stalin and Khrushchev. The criticism of the *Short Course*, the Stalinist catechism, only recently republished by Khrushchev in 200,000 copies, also had an esoteric meaning, clear to the Soviet public. Official Party history's main function in the Stalin era was to justify and sanction the Stalin security police purges. To claim—as the co-report did—that Soviet Party history in general and Ukrainian and Transcaucasian Party history in particular, must be revised and studied anew, meant that the security police archives had to be consulted. Only that way could it be proved that thousands of functionaries purged by Stalin and Khrushchev were not spies and wreckers, just representatives of "anti-Leninist tendencies".

This was made clear by an article in the same issue of

Questions of History which attacked historians for ignoring the activities of Kossior, Chubar and Postyshev, all of whom had been purged by Khrushchev!

The apparatchik-historians, officially attached to the Central Committee (that is to Khrushchev's secretariat) were furious with Burdzhakov. Stuchebnikova of the Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin Institute found it impossible to agree "that the treatment of questions of Party-history is the most backward sector on the history front". Kostomarov, of the Moscow Party History Institute, angrily refuted the contention that Lenin was a collective leader: according to him "Lenin directed as leader of our Party and leader of the revolution".

(For the next fifteen months there were concentrated attacks in the professional press against Burdzhakov but he was not fired until 1957 after Khrushchev ousted Malenkov, Molotov, Kaganovich and their associates. This seems to show who were his backers.)

We have it from Khrushchev himself that the proposal of Burdzhakov to re-examine Ukrainian Party (and security police) history was promptly acted upon. Said Khrushchev in his anti-Stalin speech:

Not long ago—only several days before the present congress—we called to the Central Committee Presidium Session and interrogated the investigating Judge Rodos, who in his time investigated and interrogated Kossior, Chubar and Kosaryev. He is a vile person, with the brain of a bird, and morally completely degenerate. And it was this man who was deciding the fate of prominent Party workers; he was making judgments also concerning the politics in these matters, because having established their "crime", he provided therewith materials from which important political implications could be drawn.

The question arises whether a man with such an intellect could alone make the investigation in a manner to prove the guilt of people such as Kossior and others. No, he could not have done it without proper directives. At the Central Committee Presidium Session he told us:

"I was told that Kossior and Chubar were people's enemies and for this reason, I, as an investigative judge, had to make them confess that they are enemies."

A Party Commission under the control of the Presidium had then been working for *two* years on examining the cases of the

purge victims. But the cases of Khrushchev's own victims were investigated not by this commission but by the Presidium itself only several days before the Twentieth Congress. This makes it highly probable that in view of Khrushchev's strong bid for power, his rivals had united and decided to investigate and possibly expose the purges conducted by him.

During the same period two other anti-Khrushchev steps were taken, one by the majority decision of the Presidium, the other by Marshal Zhukov.

All the 1,436 delegates to the Twentieth Party Congress had received a set of eighteen printed documents. The sets were numbered. The delegates had to sign a printed receipt, undertaking secrecy and acknowledging that they would be personally responsible to the Party for these documents. None of the fraternal delegates from foreign Parties received this set. The documents—"Lenin's testament"—were described and quoted in Chapter II, here it is sufficient to recall, that Lenin warned the Party that Stalin as secretary general "concentrated enormous powers" in his hands and that he was far too rude, capricious and impatient to be left in office. The testament also contained advice on how to ensure true collective leadership by enlarging the Central Committee. In the set there were documents to show how Stalin suppressed this testament—containing also some important articles of Lenin.

If there was anyone for whom this disclosure of Lenin's testament was both disagreeable and dangerous, it was surely Khrushchev. He it was who sought to associate his name to the Stalin-symbol; he it was who arrogated to himself by his servile Ukrainian and Kazakh Parties the rank of leader of the Party and the country, the head of the Presidium. His uncontrollable temper, his capricious sayings, his uncouth and often rude manner were well known to everybody.

Yet it is a fact that these documents were unearthed and assembled by historians, that they were sent to the printers and nearly 2,000 copies printed, and lastly that the secretariat of the Congress, which was virtually Khrushchev's own secretariat, had to deliver them to all Congress delegates, and had to produce receipts for safe delivery!

How and exactly when the Presidium forced Khrushchev to agree to this step, is not clear. At least it cannot be documented

from Soviet sources. The present chronicle has so far avoided reference to unsubstantiated rumours and to press reports outside the Sino-Soviet orbit. There is no reason to violate this practice now. It is enough to state that the Presidium took steps to warn the Congress delegates against any effort on Khrushchev's part to become the "Stalin of today". The fact that the set of eighteen anti-Stalin (and anti-Khrushchev) documents was officially distributed, demonstrated to the Congress that this was the Party line: that Khrushchev's powers were limited.

Another important warning to Khrushchev and to the Congress came from the army. Speaking at the Party conference of the Moscow Military District, Marshal Zhukov made a strong protest against the interference by the Party apparatus in military affairs:

Certain efforts have been made in the district to subject the official activity of commanders to criticism at party meetings. Such efforts are blameworthy. Our task is the comprehensive strengthening of the authority of the commanders, giving support to exacting officers and generals. (*Krasnaya Zvezda*—Red Star, official organ of the Red Army, January 25, 1956.)

It was of course a general practice to criticise officers, commanders, military or other experts at Party meetings. Hence in this case the significance was in the timing of Zhukov's protest—on the eve of the Twentieth Congress.

Many symptoms in the official decisions of the Party and the government during the last three weeks before the Twentieth Congress showed that a fight was going on over the Stalin-cult. One example of these symptoms was the protocol-ordered letter of greetings sent to Voroshilov on his 75th birthday by the Centcom and the Council of Ministers—ten days before the Congress. The ceremonial phrase on these occasions was to call the congratulated leader "a pupil of the great Lenin and a close comrade-in-arms [or simply comrade-in-arms] of Stalin".* However on this occasion, Voroshilov, one of the main Stalinists, was called only a pupil of Lenin. Stalin's name was omitted. This was virtually an instruction given by the Centcom and the Council of Ministers for the alteration

* On the sixtieth birthday of Mikoyan (November 24, 1955) the Central Committee greeting called him "a true disciple of Lenin and a *comrade-in-arms of Stalin*".

of this ceremonial phrase. *Khrushchev and his faction could not prevent this.* In his own domains however Khrushchev still kept up the Stalin myth. In the eve-of-congress articles in the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Kazakh press Stalin was praised, pictures of him published. Khrushchev's friend, the Presidium member Kirichenko, and other Khrushchev-associates made favourable references to Stalin. In certain other republics, as for instance in Armenia, where the Mikoyan-Malenkov faction was supported, Stalin's name was not mentioned.

The fight still went on about the Stalin myth. Khrushchev in temporary alliance with the Molotov-Kaganovich-Voroshilov faction tried to show that, in spite of all, Stalin was popular in important provinces and among "leading Party members".

The Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was opened by Khrushchev on February 14, 1956, in the Great Hall of the Kremlin Palace. To the 1,500 delegates and scores of fraternal delegates he gave a clear indication of where he stood. He spoke about the death of such "*most prominent figures*" as Stalin, Gottwald and Tokuda. By demoting Stalin to the level of second rankers like the Czechoslovak Gottwald and the Japanese Tokuda, he made a concession to the opponents of the Stalin-cult. But he spoke of Stalin's death as a *loss*. And in his main report delivered on the same day he said:

Shortly after the Nineteenth Congress of the Party *death tore Josip Vissarionovich Stalin from our ranks*. The enemies of socialism counted on the possibility of confusion in the ranks of our Party, of discord in its leadership. . . . These calculations, however, came to nought. The Communist Party rallied around its Central Committee still more closely. . . . The unity of our Party has been built up over the years and decades; it grew and was strengthened in the struggle with a multiplicity of enemies. Trotskyists, Bukharinists, bourgeois nationalists and other vicious *enemies of the people* . . . made desperate attempts to undermine from within the Leninist unity of Party ranks—and all of them smashed their heads against this unity. (Emphasis added.)

Had Khrushchev known that in eleven days he would deliver a long speech making an all round exposure of Stalin's mass-murders, he would not have said "*death tore Stalin from our ranks*", from the ranks of those, many of whom Stalin

intended to murder—according to Khrushchev. He would not have referred with approval to the purges, during which the *enemies of the people* had their heads smashed in, had he known that in eleven days' time he would have this to say:

Stalin originated the concept "enemy of the people". This term automatically rendered it unnecessary that the ideological errors of a man or men engaged in a controversy be proven: this term made possible the usage of the most cruel repression, violating all norms of revolutionary legality, against anyone who in any way disagreed with Stalin, against those who were only suspected of hostile intent, against those who had bad reputations. This concept "enemy of the people", actually eliminated the possibility of any kind of ideological fight or the making of one's views known on this or that issue, even those of a practical character. . . .

This led to glaring violations of revolutionary legality, and to the fact that many entirely innocent persons, who in the past had defended the Party line, became victims. We must assert that in regard to those persons who in their time had opposed the Party line, there were often no sufficiently serious reasons for their physical annihilation. The formula "enemy of the people" was specifically introduced for the purpose of physically annihilating such individuals.

Throughout the Congress Khrushchev was the only Soviet delegate who spoke of Stalin with respect and approval. The other Soviet delegate who mentioned Stalin was Mikoyan, but his aim in doing so was to accustom the Soviet people to adverse criticism of Stalin. Two foreign delegates, the French Thorez and the Chinese Chu Tyeh defended the Stalin-cult. Kaganovich—without naming the dead dictator—proposed that de-Stalinisation should cease. All the other delegates refrained from mentioning Stalin's name and many of them spoke against "the cult of personality". This showed that the combined Khrushchevite-Stalinite factions could not persuade the delegates to help them in preserving the Stalin-symbol. The majority of the delegates were Khrushchev's own apparatchiki, but he could not count on their backing in this. Their stand was: dictatorship without the right to murderous purges.

Next day, February 15, Marshal Chu Tyeh, the Chinese delegate read the telegram from the Chinese Centcom signed by Mao Tse-tung on February 9. The telegram emphasised

"the invincibility of the Soviet Communist Party created by Lenin and *nurtured by Stalin* and his closest comrades-in-arms".

The Soviet Centcom in its letter of greeting to Vorshilov on February 4 had omitted Stalin's name. Five days later Khrushchev through his supporter the Soviet Ambassador in Peking had ensured that Mao should stress Stalin's role five days later. The rest of the telegram was in the spirit of the cult of personality—Khrushchev's personality:

The great successes of the USSR in foreign and domestic policy in recent years are inseparable from the correct leadership of the well-trying Central Committee of the CPSU *headed by Comrade Khrushchev*. (Emphasis added.)

The following day (February 16) Mikoyan made his famous attack on Stalin, on Khrushchev and on the practice of purges, of falsifications of history and dogmatism in general.

Mikoyan's speech had the effect of a bomb-explosion. To Stalin's and Khrushchev's executed victims, these "enemies of the people", he gave the fraternal title "comrades", while the dead dictator was plain "Stalin". He said that the universally acclaimed last work of Stalin, *The Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, ought to be subjected to a "critical revision".

In analysing the economic position of present-day capitalism *a well-known thesis of Stalin . . . is hardly helpful, hardly correct*—in relation to the USA, Britain and France—that with the break-up of the world-market, the "volume of production in these countries will shrink". This assertion does not explain the complex and contradictory phenomena of present-day capitalism.

Mikoyan strongly criticised the Party historians, the Stalinist *Short Course of Party History* "which cannot satisfy us". Like Burdzhakov at the historians' conference, he suggested that archives and historical documents, not newspaper files and Party textbooks, should provide the raw material for history books. They would yield a truer picture of events than the one contained in the *Short Course*. In criticising the Party historians, he said that some events were not explained with true Marxist analysis but were ascribed to "*alleged sabotage on the part of some Party leaders . . . who were wrongly declared enemies of the people many years after the events described*". He singled out two such innocent victims of the purges, *Comrade Antonov*

Ovseyenko and *Comrade Kossior*. This was an open rehabilitation of two "unpersons" who were at that moment still officially enemies of the people. With this declaration Mikoyan, as one of the leaders, took a momentous step. Its significance was of course not in this alone. *One at least of the two rehabilitated leaders, Kossior, had been ousted, purged and succeeded by Khrushchev!* Mikoyan could have chosen hundreds of other innocent purge victims. The special commission had already cleared hundreds without publishing their names. In naming Kossior, Mikoyan made the deadliest possible attack against Khrushchev, who had to defend himself in great detail against this implied but direct accusation, in his secret speech some days later.

The most important part of the Mikoyan speech was its conclusion. He spoke at length about the secret documents handed to the delegates. After a short summary of Lenin's hitherto unknown testament, he went on to say:

Lenin's great anxiety about the fate of our Party and our revolution before he left us is well known. More than anything else he feared a split in the Party, a split in the alliance of the working class and the peasantry. He was preoccupied with the search for means to avert one and the other. He was convinced that if the unity of the ranks of the Party, of its leadership, was observed; if the alliance of the working class and the peasantry was preserved and strengthened, the cause of Communism was invincible.

Mikoyan then finished by saying: "*We not only take oaths on Lenin's name but are making every effort to put into practice Lenin's ideas and fulfil honourably his commandments.*" (Tempestuous, prolonged applause.)

The delegates, all knowing by heart Stalin's famous Oath to Lenin, and having read Lenin's testament and the facts of how Stalin had suppressed it, understood everything. Mikoyan had made it clear to them, why they had received the secret documents. Unity of the Party, unity of the leadership, was endangered by Khrushchev's bid for dictatorial power. The alliance between the working class and the peasantry was endangered by Khrushchev's far-fetched agricultural schemes. The Congress was asked to fulfil Lenin's testament. If it could not be fulfilled against Stalin, it should at least be fulfilled against Khrushchev!

The tempestuous, prolonged applause accorded to Mikoyan, showed the general mood of the Congress. Next day, Maurice Thorez, the Stalinist French leader, attempted to turn the tide. He said:

The CPSU has always provided the model for firm adherence to principles and unfailing fidelity to the great ideas of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

A week before Khrushchev's total denunciation of Stalin, therefore, Thorez was still demanding *firm adherence and unfailing fidelity* to Stalin. This was to impress upon the Congress that the mighty Chinese Party and the largest Communist Party in opposition anywhere in the world, the French Party, were still faithful to Stalin.

Kaganovich, on February 18, also tried to stop the anti-Stalin campaign. He said:

After the Nineteenth Congress of the Party the Central Committee boldly—I have in view boldness which has to do with ideas, which is principled, theoretical—raised the question of the struggle against the cult of personality. This is not an easy question. But the Central Committee gave a correct, Marxist-Leninist, Party-type answer to it. (Emphasis added.)

According to Kaganovich, this problem was already solved and there was no need to discuss it any more. Anyhow, all discussions should be “principled”, “theoretical”, that is not concrete, not personal and they should not raise the question of responsibility and guilt. Kaganovich still hoped to stop a most detailed personal attack on Stalin.

The majority of the many speakers at the Congress avoided mentioning Stalin and most of them attacked the “cult of personality”, the new ceremonial phrase to cover the mass murder of innocent people.

Two intellectual leaders made a point of joining the Mikoyan line. Mme A. M. Pankratova, a member of the Central Committee and the official leader of Soviet historians, like Mikoyan and her colleague Burdzhakov, attacked a familiar feature of Soviet Party literature when she spoke of

the subjectivist attribution of all our failures to wrecking activities of enemies or of people *declared to be enemies*, and the attribution of our successes to the talents of individual leaders.

Like Mikoyan and Burdzhakov, Mme Pankratova also criticised the official Soviet history of the Ukraine, which was full of Khrushchev-cult, and charged it with "distortion of the history of the Bolshevik organisation in the Ukraine". She too demanded real historical research, utilising basic sources in the various archives.

Mikhail Sholokhov, the world famous author of *Quiet Flows the Don*, speaking to the Congress painted a dismal picture of Soviet literature under Party direction and made a scarcely veiled attack on Khrushchev. He said:

The Union of Soviet Writers has . . . a total of 3,773 persons armed with pens. . . . But don't let this figure alarm you or gratify you. . . . A large part of the list of authors consist of *dead souls*. . . . Strange as it may sound, they have nothing to write about. . . . The Writers' Union has gradually changed from the creative organisation which it should be, into an administrative organisation, and although the Secretariat has industriously held meetings . . . nevertheless *there have been no books*. . . . Fadeyev turned out to be quite a *power-loving General Secretary*. . . . Couldn't Fadeyev have been told long ago: the Writers' Union is *not a military unit and certainly not a disciplinary barracks*. (Emphasis added.)

Pankratova, Sholokhov and many other important delegates demonstrated to the Congress by their speeches their agreement with the general anti-Stalin ferment in the country and with the particular line initiated by Mikoyan at the Congress. All this certainly had an effect on the delegates. Yet the resolution of the Congress passed on February 24, *twelve hours before Khrushchev's secret speech against Stalin, still contained the phrase "enemy of the people"*, and instructed the Central Committee "not to weaken in the fight against the *vestiges* of the cult of personality". This seemed the victory of the line proposed by Kaganovich: that the cult of personality *was* practically done away with, only "vestiges" remained. The resolution did not instruct the Central Committee to concern itself with a "question of immense importance for the Party now and for the future—how the cult of the person of Stalin had been gradually growing, the cult which became . . . the source of a whole series of exceedingly serious and grave perversions of Party principles, of Party democracy, of revolutionary legality", as Khrushchev

was to say barely twelve hours later! He was also to reveal then that it is not a question of uprooting the last vestiges of this cult:

Because of the fact that *not all as yet realise fully . . .* the great harm caused by the violations of collective leadership . . . and because of the accumulation of immense and limitless power in the hands of one person—the Central Committee of the Party considers it *absolutely necessary to make the material pertaining to this matter available to the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU.*

We have it from the official report of the Congress that the resolution was drafted by a committee of fifty-five men in co-operation with the entire Presidium. Did they not know, did Khrushchev himself not know that twelve hours later the resolution would be annihilated by Khrushchev, speaking in the name of the Central Committee?

For February 25 a great festive demonstration was planned on the Red Square in honour of the Congress. Moscow Radio repeatedly asked the population of Moscow to take part in the procession. This request was broadcast by Moscow Radio for the last time on the 23rd. Something happened that evening, because the plans were suddenly dropped.

The next mystery: the Chairman of the morning session of February 24 closed the session with this procedural announcement:

At six o'clock there will be a closed evening meeting of the Congress. At this meeting delegates with deciding and with consultative votes will attend.

But according to the official stenographic record of the Congress that "closed evening meeting" was held on February 25! We know that it was a night session, started some time after midnight.

Why this delay? What happened during these six hours? Why the contradiction between the resolution and the secret speech delivered twelve hours later?

These questions unfortunately cannot be answered through direct documentation. It is obvious from Khrushchev's entire life, and his line before and after the Congress, that he was most reluctant to make an all out attack on Stalin's memory. It is also obvious that the secret speech was not due to any general anti-Stalin mood of the country or of the Congress delegates.

Otherwise the resolution would not have been as weak, and no mention would have been made of "enemies of the people". Something must have happened behind the scenes during the Congress and during that unscheduled postponement of the speech by six hours.

A study of the speech gives many clues:

1. It is obvious that this document of nearly 20,000 words *was not a last minute improvisation*. It is an elaborately documented analysis of Stalinism in all its aspects. It shows how unlimited and uncontrolled power must lead to horrible aberrations. The works of Marx, Engels and Lenin had been restudied, the published correspondence of Marx and Engels had been searched for apt quotations to prove the many important theses. Of these, we shall limit ourselves to three:

(a) The fathers of Communism, Marx, Engels and Lenin, were principled opponents of dictatorship over the Party and over its Central Committee.

(b) Lenin insisted that all major questions should be fully discussed at frequently called plenary sessions of the Central Committee.

(c) Marx, Engels and Lenin were principled opponents of the cult of personality.

As during the Stalin-era these quotations were naturally almost never used, it must have taken some weeks to gather this material—*after* the ideological line which they were to prove was agreed upon. (It is here beside the point that the opposite line can be also "documented" by Marxist quotations.)

Nearly four decades of Soviet history, of Party history, the military history of the civil war and of the second world war had been raked over, diplomatic and military archives searched for illustration of various Stalinist crimes and criminal blunders.

The special Party commission charged with re-investigation of the purges had been working since Beriya's fall in 1953. The secret speech stated that "from 1954 to the present time the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court had rehabilitated 7,679 persons, many of them posthumously".

Study of the speech shows that the MVD archives and the minutes of Supreme Court proceedings had been minutely

examined, that various digests had been prepared and illustrative material selected to be quoted in full.

To illustrate to what extremes the Stalin-cult went, Soviet novels, plays and films were analysed. The role attributed to Stalin's greatness is ridiculed by several illustrations.

All this goes to show that most of the essay which later became known as Khrushchev's secret speech on Stalin—*was the product of a co-operative effort lasting several months*. The editors and chief authors of the essay must have been Party leaders directing a staff of Marxist theoreticians, economists, literary critics and specialists in various aspects of Soviet history.

2. This being so, all members of the leadership must have known about this work. Not only because such research cannot be kept secret—there are apparatchiki in every archive and office—but mainly because the aim of this work was *publication*. This essay or speech was prepared to initiate a new political line, *a line inimical to Khrushchev's wish to become the Stalin of today*. Moreover this text contains the most important documents of Lenin's testament. As we know, these documents were printed and distributed among the 1,500 delegates. Khrushchev, Kaganovich, Mao Tse-tung, Thorez knew about this document. They must have hoped that it would never be read to the Congress. Otherwise Khrushchev would not have said that "death tore Stalin from our ranks". Thorez would not have called for "unfailing fidelity to Stalin's great ideas", Kaganovich would not have tried to avert a personal attack against Stalin.

3. There also are important clues to the question of authorship in the form and the contents of the secret speech.

Stylistic analysis of Soviet texts is made extremely difficult by the fact that most leaders speak in the usual textbook jargon and the fact that in the Soviet Union it is difficult and dangerous to deviate from a very large number of ceremonial phrases and ritual quotations. Many Stalinist turns of speech permeated Party language by the sheer force of endless repetition. Although stenographic reports of *impromptu* speeches are usually very carefully edited and/or censored, some signs of individual style can nevertheless be traced to various types of leaders. Khrushchev's *impromptu* speeches are rambling, full of

repetitions and structurally rather inept: Marxist platitudes, pedestrian proverbs, rural analogies are mixed with uncouth turns of speech and vulgar abuse.

"His" secret speech, or at least ninety per cent of it, is singularly free of all this. It is a carefully constructed argument. The structure is well balanced and many of the generalisations are typical of calm Party theorists. Pithy statements abound; for instance: "Arbitrary behaviour by one person encouraged and permitted arbitrariness in others."

The impromptu speeches of certain Party leaders like Mikoyan, Malenkov and their associates have a less pedestrian, less petrified style. They resorted to vulgar expressions only when they had to repeat officially obligatory Stalinist phases like "chained dog of imperialism" or "people-hating monsters". The structure of their speeches was generally well planned, their presentation quiet and logical.

The general theoretical-impersonal style of the secret speech is broken only in some ten to fifteen short instances. Here the tone is personal, the style different. In these instances Khrushchev exposes his enemies, defends himself against accusations, and tries to win friends by stressing the anti-Stalin line of a Zhukov, a Mikoyan or a Molotov.

The style of the speech strongly suggests that it was prepared by a large editorial staff and edited by certain Party leaders, most probably by Mikoyan and Malenkov. Khrushchev was then forced by circumstances to present it as his own. With the aid of his inner secretariat he added the Khrushchevite line to it by inserting paragraphs serving his own purposes. He must also have made slight changes consisting mainly in substituting at intervals the first person singular for the first person plural. This was to show that this Central Committee report was mainly his own.

The contents of the speech make this even clearer. The editorial staff had been working on research for months. The aim was to give a detailed analysis of the cult of personality, and show the absolute necessity of reforming the practice of leadership. All the theses of the tract have one single aim: to show the deadly danger to every inhabitant of the Soviet Union, to the future of the country and the régime—if one-man dictatorship were permitted to re-emerge.

During the months this tract was being prepared Khrushchev and his apparatus were working for exactly the opposite aim: secure his one-man dictatorship. His actions and statements during this period indicate that he believed this confidential tract would never be presented to the Congress. He used his entire apparatus and propaganda machinery to proclaim his leadership over the Party and the nation and present himself as the head of the Presidium. Yet the secret speech says:

What is the reason that mass repression against activists increased more and more after the Seventeenth Party Congress? It was because at that time Stalin had *so elevated himself above the Party and above the nation that he ceased to consider either the Central Committee or the Party.*

(This in view of the fact that no Central Committee plenum was called between July 1955 and the Congress.)

Or again:

If we were to consider this matter as Marxist-Leninists, then we have to *state unequivocally that the practice of leadership which came into being during the last years of Stalin's life became a serious obstacle in the path of Soviet social development.*

And what about this argument? Mass repression is the logical outcome of the cult of personality, which leads to unlimited and uncontrolled one-man dictatorship. And

mass repression had a negative influence on the moral-political conditions of the Party, created a situation of uncertainty, contributed to the spreading of unhealthy suspicion, and showed distrust among Communists.

The "theses" of the speech are

(a) Marxist-Leninist refutations of ideological pretexts for one-man dictatorship, for terror and mass repression. Hence the thesis is refuted that "as we march forward towards socialism, class-war must allegedly sharpen". The "enemy of the people" concept is sharply denounced.

(b) Proofs that according to Marxist theory and Lenin's practice ultimate power rests in the Party Congress and the Central Committee plenum. "There was no matter so important that Lenin himself decided it *without asking for advice*

and approval of the majority of the Central Committee members or of the members of the Politbureau."

(c) That without democratic majority rule in the Central Committee and the Presidium, and without Socialist legality, there is no defence against "the wilfulness of individuals abusing their power".

The conclusion of the speech makes no mention of the vestiges of the cult of personality. In concluding, Khrushchev was forced to read to the Congress these statements:

Comrades! We must abolish the cult of personality decisively, once and for all; we must draw the proper conclusions concerning both ideological-theoretical and practical work.

It is necessary for this purpose:

First, in a Bolshevik manner, to condemn and to eradicate the cult of personality as alien to Marxism-Leninism. . . .

In this connection we will be forced to do much work in order to examine critically from the Marxist-Leninist viewpoint and to correct the widespread erroneous views connected with the cult of personality in the sphere of history, philosophy, economy, and of other sciences, as well as in literature and the fine arts. It is especially necessary that in the immediate future we compile a serious textbook of the history of our party which will be edited with scientific Marxist objectivity, a textbook of the history of Soviet society, a book pertaining to the events of the civil war and the great patriotic war.

Secondly to continue systematically and consistently the work done by the Party's Central Committee during the last years, a work characterised by minute observance in all Party organisations, from the bottom to the top, of the Leninist principles of Party leadership, characterised, above all, *by the main principle of collective leadership*.

Thirdly, to restore completely the Leninist principles of Soviet *Socialist democracy*, expressed in the Constitution of the Soviet Union, to fight the wilfulness of individuals abusing their power. The evil caused by acts violating revolutionary Socialist legality which have accumulated during a long time as a result of the negative influence of the cult of the individual has to be completely corrected.

Curiously enough the Congress approved *only the theses* of the secret report, not its entire text. The official stenographic report stated:

Having heard the report (*doklad*) of Comrade Khrushchev on the cult of personality and its consequences, the Twentieth Congress . . . *approves the theses of the report of the Central Committee.*

The theses were of course in the new anti-dictatorship line, in agreement with the "Leninist principles of Soviet *Socialist democracy*": The Congress did not approve the entire text in which Khrushchev had made many insertions to serve his own purposes in the struggle for power.

Before considering these insertions a far more important question must be faced. What happened during the Congress, not necessarily in the Congress Hall, to persuade Khrushchev on a change of line? For a time he hoped that he could prevent the publication of this anti-Stalin and anti-Khrushchev tract. From February 14 to 18 attempts were made by him and by his allies of the day to prevent its reading. From February 19 onwards all these attempts ceased, yet on February 24, the first resolution of the Congress assumed that there are only vestiges of the Stalin-cult. The final resolution accepted next day asserted the exact opposite. This shows that a fight was going on between the anti-Stalinists and the combined Khrushchevite-Stalinite forces.

On the evening of February 23, at the very time when the first resolution of the Congress (February 24) was drafted, Marshal Zhukov and the Red Army generals fired their second warning shot. They gathered to celebrate the thirty-eighth anniversary of the Red Army. The festive speech was delivered by Marshal Zhukov who gave some overt, and more covert, esoteric warnings that the generals would not stand for a Stalinist treatment of the army.

The text of Lenin's testament was in the hands of the delegates. A closed meeting was on the agenda. It was clear that the anti-Stalin tract, or at least a part of it, was to be read by someone. The question was: by whom? *Who exposes whom?* To whom should go the credit and responsibility for delivering this most momentous speech in the history of international Communism?

Khrushchev's interest was clear. He did not want the speech delivered. But if he could not stop it, it was far better for him to take it as his own than let someone else deliver it. He obviously had to satisfy the sponsors and authors of the speech by not omitting important material and important theses—if he

did not want them to rise at the closed meeting and add the material implicating Khrushchev personally. But by undertaking to deliver the speech as his own he satisfied his opponents. They thought that by this act Khrushchev would make it impossible for himself ever to aspire again to one-man dictatorship.

But why was Khrushchev forced to deliver the speech?

The gist of the answer lies in the secret speech itself. Mikoyan and the two historians, and a special article in *Questions of History* had all featured the innocent victims of the Ukrainian purges. Mikoyan had singled out the Ukrainian Kossior as an innocent comrade done to death. He probably had further damaging documents up his sleeve. Khrushchev did everything in his speech to defend himself against the accusation that he had anything to do with Kossior's murder. He paid far more attention to Kossior than to scores of more important victims. When dealing with Stalin's one-man decisions, he used the following instance to show how people (Khrushchev included) learned about new purges:

I can remember how the Ukraine learned about Kossior's arrest. The Kiev Radio used to start its broadcasts thus: "This is Radio Kossior." When one day the broadcast began without naming Kossior, everyone was quite certain that something had happened to Kossior, that he had probably been arrested.

Curiously enough Khrushchev used Kossior three times as an example of *Stalin's* tyranny and of the misdeeds of Beriya and Yezhov. He cited the Kossior-case as an example of Stalin's practice of leaving the Politbureau—of which Khrushchev was then a candidate member—uninformed about the purges:

We are justly accusing Yezhov for the degenerate practices of 1937. But we have to answer these questions: Could Yezhov have arrested *Kossior*, for instance, without the knowledge of Stalin? Was there an exchange of opinions or a Political Bureau decision concerning this? No, there was not, as there was none regarding other cases of this type. Could Yezhov have decided such important matters as the fate of such eminent Party figures? No, it would be a display of naivety to consider this the work of Yezhov alone. It is clear that these matters were decided by Stalin, and that without his orders and his sanction Yezhov could not have done this.

We have examined the cases of, and have rehabilitated, *Kossior*, *Rudzutak*, *Postyshev*, *Kosaryev*, and others. For what causes were they arrested and sentenced? The review of evidence shows that there was no reason for this. They, like many others, were arrested without the prosecutor's knowledge. In such a situation there is no need for any sanction, for what sort of a sanction could there be when *Stalin decided everything*? He was the chief prosecutor in these cases. Stalin not only agreed to, but on his own initiative issued arrest orders. We must say this so that the delegates to the Congress can clearly undertake and themselves assess this and draw the proper conclusions.

In the paragraph—already quoted—dealing with the Presidium's interrogation of the investigative Judge *Rodos*, *Khrushchev* mentioned *Kossior* twice.

Khrushchev did everything with his insertions to show that he had nothing to do with *Kossior's* execution (*Kossior* was of course a victim of Stalin's three-man purge-commission sent to the Ukraine: *Molotov*, *Khrushchev* and *Yezhov*).

He had other reasons for agreeing to deliver the speech:

1. When he ousted *Malenkov* as a "belcher-up of rightist deviations", a *Rykovite-Bukharinite* enemy, he had made *Malenkov*, so to speak, officially the leading anti-Stalinist in the leadership. During the Congress *Mikoyan* became the other outstanding leader of the very popular anti-Stalinist front. *Khrushchev* himself, by speaking respectfully about Stalin on the opening day of the Congress, appeared as a Stalinist. By undertaking to deliver the secret speech he could turn himself overnight into the leader of the most popular and ever-growing movement in the country and the Congress: the anti-Stalin movement.

2. In making the official exposure of Stalin, he had a chance to blacken his enemies as Stalinist and award the halo of anti-Stalinism to his adherents and to those of his rivals whom it was expedient at the moment to placate. Consequently he took great pains in his last minute insertions to show, to prove, to announce that *Malenkov* was the evil spirit and alter-ego of Stalin during the war, in fabricating the Leningrad affair and in other matters. He showed that *Kaganovich* tried to defend Stalin because he was Stalin's accomplice. *Molotov*, *Mikoyan* and *Voroshilov* were accorded mixed treatment. They were

shown at one time as close associates of Stalin, but they were also praised as men badly treated by Stalin and as the intended victims of Stalin's next purge. Mikoyan was praised as a person who stood up against Stalin in *defence of Khrushchev*. Zhukov was praised as an anti-Stalinist and Khrushchev took great pains to show how he, Khrushchev, had defended Zhukov against the slanders of Stalin. Bulganin had been called by Khrushchev a year earlier "one of the close comrade-in-arms of Stalin". Now he accorded him the rank of leading anti-Stalinist. The security police chief, Ignatiev, a trusted associate of Khrushchev, was defended in the secret speech, although the Doctors' Plot had been fabricated under Ignatiev's rule. Khrushchev said:

Present at this Congress as a delegate is the former Minister of State Security, Comrade Ignatiev. Stalin told him curtly: "If you don't obtain confessions from the doctors, we will shorten you by a head."

The purely tactical, purely verbal-verbocratic level of the Khrushchevite insertions in the speech is best illustrated by this quotation. Because if MVD chief Ignatiev could be excused, could be a delegate and a comrade, after executing such orders of Stalin's, why could not the others, Yagoda, Yezhov, Beriya and the rest also be excused? They also had their orders from Stalin (and Stalin's associates); they also might have been threatened by Stalin with the shortening of their heads in case they did not produce results.

By magnifying Stalin into a far more powerful monster than he was and by indulging, so to speak, in an inverted cult of personality by alleging that all crimes were committed by Stalin, on his orders, under the threat of death—the accusations against Stalinist leaders and MVD officials were weakened and the actions of the brave men who resisted him were made incredible.

The general argument of the speech takes a different line. Stalin's unlimited and uncontrolled power was made possible by the wrong system of leadership. This system was in turn exploited by wily security police chiefs and led to murders, fabrications, etc. The dictator and the police chiefs were responsible for their deeds. This is to show that security police work should be under treble control, that of legal organs, that of the Council of Ministers and that of the Presidium.

Now the reasons for the six hours' postponement of the closed meeting have to be considered. During these six hours the Presidium, or the enlarged Presidium with leading Central Committee members, were considering the final text. While the Congress was going on the basic text prepared by the co-operative effort of the anti-Stalin faction, was discussed by the three main factions of the Presidium and each faction must have put forward its own suggested final version. There are many instances in Communist and Comintern history for such conflicts over rival "final texts".

In this case the stand of the anti-Stalin faction (Mikoyan, Malenkov?) was clear. They wanted to preserve the "theses" of the new "dictator-proof" and "purge-proof" Soviet *Socialist democracy*.

The Khrushchev faction even if it could not avert the speech wanted to build in a full defence of Khrushchev. But many of Khrushchev's own supporters could not have been averse to the idea of a "purge-proof" régime.

The Molotov-Kaganovich faction was in principle against the speech, against the personal attack on Stalin, and mainly against the reformist, "right-wing" theses, smacking of social democracy. But if the text had to be delivered, they wanted to insert some defence of Stalin's old associates—themselves. In this wish all three main factions agreed.

The version which was finally accepted was a compromise. On the ideological plane the anti-Stalin faction was fully victorious. Khrushchev, by abandoning Molotov, Kaganovich and Voroshilov and accepting the Mikoyan ideological line, obtained Mikoyan's support against these Stalinists and for the insertions favourable to Khrushchev. Mikoyan had to abandon Malenkov, by agreeing to the insertion of scarcely veiled accusations against Malenkov. Malenkov was pictured as Stalin's closest associate and almost as his evil spirit. Mikoyan was rewarded by Khrushchev when he featured him as an anti-Stalinist.

Molotov and Voroshilov in exchange for being featured as intended victims of Stalinist purges abandoned Kaganovich who was featured as a Stalinist.

Mikoyan had obviously some hold over Khrushchev. But he had to make more than textual concessions to Khrushchev

during his manœuvres to ensure the reading of the secret report. He threatened Khrushchev with exposure of the Ukrainian purges and possibly with various other deeds unmentioned in the final text. But he had to make concessions at the Congress itself. These were concessions in the Party power struggle and thanks to them the Khrushchev machine emerged from the Congress far more powerful than before. Mikoyan and his faction believed that by accepting the new Party line, and by turning drastically against Stalin, Khrushchev could not in the future make any attempt to become a dictator. In this they were mistaken.

This chapter has documented only various symptoms of the "secret speech struggle". Soviet sources show clearly that opposing political lines were clashing and that Khrushchev did not know on the first day of the Congress that he would deliver "his" speech on the last day. Many lesser points are well documented. The rest either cannot be documented, or the documentation would be too long for inclusion in the present work. We cannot prove exactly what happened. But the known and documented facts are enough to show that this momentous speech which had a hurricane like effect on Communist theory and practice, had a most mixed origin. Self-defence of a clique of rulers, the jockeying for position of various factions, tactical manœuvres during the Congress, all these things play a very large part in its origin. Khrushchev himself decided during the last days, or perhaps even on the last day, to deliver it. The new principles which he enunciated in the name of the Central Committee and with which he professed to agree wholeheartedly, were never put into practice by him. During the three years after the Congress he did everything to stop their realisation. The "erroneous views connected with the cult of personality in the sphere of history, philosophy, economics and the other sciences, as well as in literature and the fine arts" were not corrected, but strengthened by him. Collective leadership was not developed but destroyed by him. His hearty professions of admiration for Molotov, Bulganin, Marshal Zhukov and others were proven by subsequent events to have been tactical manœuvres. He elevated himself over the Central

Committee and over the Party. But the world then could not have foreseen subsequent events.

An entirely false picture was given to the Soviet Union and to the outside world of the Twentieth Congress, of its leading personalities and of the character and political personality of Khrushchev!

But not only the world was misled. These apprentices of the magician Stalin did not know what djin they had let loose on themselves and on the Communist world by uncorking the bottle of anti-Stalinism. For years to come they were to wage a desperate defensive struggle against the onslaught of anti-Stalinism.

If the outside world had shown itself somewhat wanting in prudence and foresight, their own lack of it was shown to be gigantic.

XI

“A DELIRIUM OF IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBILITIES”

The Polish and Hungarian Revolutions

“When the vultures of abstraction pick out our brains,
when students are enclosed in text-books without
windows,
when language is reduced to thirty incantations,
when the lamp of imagination is extinguished,
when good people from the moon deny us our taste,
then truly
oblivion is dangerously near.”

(Adam Wazyk: “Poem for Adults”, *Nowa Kultura*,
August 1955.)

“There are writers who adapt themselves. The political
powers then imagine that these writers have no other
concern but to serve or amuse them. Sometimes, how-
ever, these entertainers slap the tyrants so hard, that the
smack resounds for ever. . . .”

(Peter Veres in the Hungarian *Irodalmi Ujsag*, September
22, 1956, *one month before* the outbreak of the Hungarian
revolt.)

THE anti-Stalin tract read by Khrushchev started a chain
reaction of explosions which shook the world of Com-
munism. The most conspicuous of these, up to the time of
writing, were the Polish and the Hungarian revolutions.

In the drama of one and in the tragedy of the other Khrush-
chev was most personally involved. The two revolutions were
caused by many factors and all of these were directly or in-
directly connected with Khrushchev or his apparatus.

The first factor, of course, was the anti-Stalin tract itself.
The Kremlin factions fighting for or against the publication of
this tract, had very vague ideas about the possibilities of
secrecy. Khrushchev read to the nearly 1,500 delegates attending
the closed meeting of the Twentieth Congress the following
sentences:

We cannot let this matter get out of the Party, especially not to the press. It is for this reason that we are considering it here at a closed session. We should know the limits; we should not give ammunition to the enemy; we should not wash our dirty linen before their eyes.

This seems to indicate that the Kremlin leaders believe their own propaganda about the monolithic unity of the Party. As matter of fact, all the Communist parties, the CPSU included, were torn by factional struggle. Khrushchev and the Kremlin leaders when they *drifted into* the decision to read the anti-Stalin tract to the Congress, couldn't have been unaware of the fact that it would be in the interest of powerful factions to make it public.

Publicised it was. It was decided that of the nearly eight million Soviet Party members and candidates six thousand "leading activists" should receive printed copies. Russian copies were sent to the Party headquarters in the satellites which in their turn made authoritative translations and had them printed for their own activities. From Peking to Warsaw and Leningrad to Samarkand these official copies were lent in great confidence to trusted friends, who also had trusted friends and so on. Many of the borrowers had several copies made, and the tract, officially printed in only some 20,000 copies in the Sino-Soviet orbit, was soon being read and feverishly discussed by hundreds of thousands of astonished, enraged, badly shocked people. The secret speech proved to be far less secret than a most popular TV show. Perhaps no speech in the twentieth century has been so much discussed in the press and in private as this one.

In a month's time Party leaders all over the Communist world had to make speeches and write articles about it. Even in the Soviet Union, where attempts were made to turn it into an "unspeech", it was soon being officially referred to.

The Soviet press, literature and theatre were dominated for two years at least by the effect of this tract. It turned out that even the Soviet peoples, eye-witnesses and victims of the *Stalin-era*, could be surprised. They were astonished by the picture of systematic mass cruelty and were surprised by the extent of the senseless mass murders.

Their calling made the writers the first and most effective

spokesmen of the despair, indignation, white-hot hatred and moral crisis caused by these revelations. All over the Communist world *Communist* writers were filled with great shame and a sense of guilt. They could never forgive Stalin and the Party apparatus for forcing, cajoling, bribing, intimidating them into killing their artistic-moral selves. In the past some of them had really believed, others pretended to believe that the peace and welfare of future generations could be ensured by a régime of murderous terrorism, in a general climate of fear, suspicion and moral depravity. By attacking the infamy, they tried to atone for their own guilt.

There was an astonishing, curious, almost unbelievable literary renaissance in the Communist world. People, who during the official drabification of literature turned to their classics or read next to nothing, became avid readers. Literary weeklies, bulky monthlies and quarterlies had their circulations increased five, ten, twenty-fold. The editions were sold out in hours or in days. Copies were passed from reader to reader till they fell apart. Many anthologies were published of such revolutionary writing and "thaw" poetry. After decades of organised public falsehood, a unanimous public opinion of indignation and resistance came into being.

Here we can give only a few instances of the kind of poems Russia was reading in this period.

Semyon Kirsanov wrote an allegorical poem about his friend—Russia—who lay dangerously ill:

"He could hardly breathe,
His lips were parched and blue . . .

.
In fact, he could only be saved by a new heart . . .

'A new heart', said the doctor, waving his hands.

I rushed to the Party, to the district committee

To ask for permission to make a new heart

As my friend could not live without one.

.
. . . And soon they all declared: "These hearts are not good enough.

Hearts must be solid, like good iron locks . . .

We need hearts that will do all they are told:

So that if they are told slander—they'll slander:
To praise—they'll praise;
To curse—they'll curse'
. . . Thus my new heart was condemned while
My dear friend was dying."

(*Novy Mir*, No. 9, 1956.)

Hundreds of poems were written about the victims of Stalin's purges and about the poet's guilt for having believed the calumnies. Two examples:

"My friend of youthful days was cruelly slandered by his enemies

.

My dearest soul, I know you won't forget the sorrow, humiliation and torture.

We said: 'There must be something in all that . . .'

We raised our hands voting for the calumny.

.

But, oh bitter shame, I did not try to defend him . . ."

(Margarita Aliger: "The Truth", *Oktyabr*, No. 2, 1956.)

"That year! Made me remember my whole life,

I lived through everything again . . .

That year, when from the bottom of the sea and the canals,

My friends began coming back again.

.

Why should I try to hide the fact that not many returned?
Seventeen years are seventeen long years."

(Olga Berggoltz: "That Year", *Novy Mir*, No. 8, 1956.)

Hundreds of poems were written expressing the longing

"For a morning's new light . . .

For boldness of thought, sound and colour,

For faith

confidence.

Not to live like a beggar

Behind tightly closed doors . . ."

(Seymyon Kirsanov: "The Seven Days of the Week",
Novy Mir, No. 9, 1956.)

A comprehensive anthology of Russian poetry, short story writing and of excerpts from novels and plays would furnish a fully documented indictment of all aspects of bureaucratic despotism. The Russian people, now that they had hope, wanted to read and did read a very great deal about their own sufferings in the recent past. The plays, novels, short stories and poems dealing with torture, concentration camps, terrible campaigns against lonely people betrayed by everybody; about heartless and stupid bureaucrats; about the senselessness of it all—gave a haunting picture of the Stalin-era: as if a giant were to have insisted on committing macabre *actions gratuits*, as if a demented ruler were pointlessly to crucify a whole country.

The Russian “thaw”—or rather forest fire—spread quickly to the non-Russian Soviet republics. The literary thaw there was, if possible, even more violent.

Among the “forces shaping Khrushchev’s political personality”, the revelations and attacks of the literary “thaw” play a prominent part. Khrushchev referred in many speeches to these rebellious writings. As, in the Soviet system, all writing not in harmony with the Party line of the day is regarded as *a dangerous political action*, the Party apparatus and propaganda fought a resolute rearguard action against the growing movement of anti-Stalinism. Daily reports poured in to Khrushchev’s Kremlin offices on the developments of the intellectual revolt from every corner of the Soviet and satellite empire. The reports included quotations of the most rebellious passages. Until then Khrushchev and his associates had received the reports of their tens of thousands of informers but very little real information about popular mood. Now they could not pretend not to know the real mood of the people. Hatred of security police methods and exasperation with the bullying interference in their lives by the Party apparatus were demonstrated daily everywhere.

And hope—this most dangerous sentiment—took hold of people.

The rebellion of writers in Poland, Hungary, China and elsewhere has been often and fully described. Far less has been written by contemporary chroniclers about the ferment and thaw in Marxism-Leninism and about *the revolt of the Communists*. The secret tract read by Khrushchev informed the Communist

Parties of the world that the Soviet Central Committee decided

to *examine critically* from the Marxist-Leninist viewpoint and to *correct* the widely spread erroneous views . . . in the sphere of history, philosophy, economics and of other sciences, as well as in literature and the arts.

Now to examine critically and to correct views can be expressed in one word: *revision*. Khrushchev and most of the Party leaders did everything to combat “revisionism” *started and declared by them*.

All over the Communist world young and old Party theoreticians understandably thought that they all could have a chance now to help in the great work. They set to work to examine critically pseudo-Marxist views, smacking of the personality-cult, on history, the sciences, art, literature, everything. The great shock felt by the people and the forest fire of the revelations in literature affected them greatly and they in their turn, prompted by their share of shame and sense of guilt, tried to atone for their past by feverishly working on “rejuvenating Marxist theory”. Accepting the new line enunciated at the Twentieth Congress, they believed mistakenly, that in the future it would not be one man’s prerogative to decide which views are Marxist, and which not. Believing that a Soviet type of “Socialist democracy” was being evolved—as promised by Khrushchev—they saw no contradiction between Party dictatorship and freedom of Marxist discussion within the Party.

This led to a veritable rebellion of Marxist intellectuals, leading to the deviation of the famous Professor Lukacs in Hungary, to the ten years’ prison sentence passed on the well-known Professor Harich in East Germany and to the forced excursion to the corrective labour colonies of thousands of unknown young intellectuals.

Marxist theory is supposed to be the Party’s creed. The leadership—and events—had demolished the Stalinist dogma. These young and old theoreticians and apparatchiki were bent on saving their creed from the ruins. Instead many of them were to be sacrificed on the forsaken altars of a creed abandoned and betrayed by its own high priests. But their fight all over the Communist world was not in vain. As so often in human affairs, the defeated camp affected the victors with its

own ideals. The long drawn out fight between "revisionist" and "truth-monopolist"—which is still going on—penetrated the entire Party apparatus. It was made very painfully obvious that everybody was a "revisionist" who dared to think independently on Marxist questions, however loyal to the Party he intended to be. In time, during the three years that Khrushchev took to reach his dictatorial position, most of the Marxist thinkers were intimidated into refraining from public criticism and attacks, but not frightened enough to be entirely silent. They are present everywhere in the Party apparatus, in publishing directorates and newspaper offices, in universities and scientific institutions, and still seize every chance to speak up when to do so is not fraught with too much danger.

The apparatus is not as blindly loyal, not as uncritical as it was in Stalin's time. A new generation of apparatchiki has grown up which knows only about the exposure of Stalin's crimes and not their full and terrorising impact on people's lives during the nineteen thirties.

A frightened MVD; a changed apparatus; the fires of anti-Stalinism raging or later smouldering everywhere; a silenced but not killed opposition: these are some of the background factors to Khrushchev's activities in the 1956-9 period.

By far the most important development of the post-Stalin era was the rebellious mood of Communist Party members, and the few large and many lesser revolts of Communists against dictatorship over the Party. The Polish and Hungarian revolts were caused by *Communists* who dared to call out the people against the Party dictators.

Like Trotsky, Bukharin, and Rykov after Lenin's death, the fighting factions after Stalin's death did not dare and/or could not afford to turn to the Soviet people against the emerging dictators, Stalin and Khrushchev. Not because the people would not have fought unanimously against the Party dictators but just because of this fact. But in Poland and in Hungary Communists and even some Communist leaders turned to the people. The results will be analysed in this chapter.

In the Soviet Union, then in China and in all other Communist Parties in power, there was a rebellion of Communists.

Who is a Communist? In what does he believe? It became more and more difficult to answer these questions during the

post-Stalin developments. At the Nineteenth Party Congress of the Soviet CP in 1952 it was promised that a commission would work out the draft of a new Party programme. The old one was obsolete in the entirely changed world of the second half of the twentieth century. The new programme should have been presented to the Twentieth Party Congress, but was not!

The Party was without a programme. The Soviet leaders declared that a great deal of critical examination and correction had to be carried out and that "Leninist Soviet Socialist democracy"—whatever that may be—had to be restored. All the ideological theses of the secret report stressed collective leadership by majority decision.

This rendered the former (frank and conspiratorial) definition of a Communist and his beliefs obsolete. The old Stalinist definition was: a Communist is someone who does as the Great Stalin tells him, and believes what he is told to believe at the moment by the Great Stalin. An examination of the speeches and actions of leading Communists in the Soviet Union and abroad will prove to anyone the correctness of this definition during the Stalin era. Even such leaders who were not at the mercy of the MVD, a Thorez, a Duclos, a Harry Pollitt or a Palmiro Togliatti were Communists according to this definition.

For a period of transition, the Party membership everywhere received the impression that this definition was no longer valid. At the same time the textbook of Party history turned out to be a pack of lies: Stalinist dogmas were incorrect; there was no Party programme—so Communists were in principle free to decide what Communist creed they should construct for themselves from the writings of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. Many did.

Believers in the Party, in Historical and Dialectical Materialism, constituted only a segment of Party membership. The majority of Party members had joined originally for opportunist reasons, or became disenchanted during the Stalin or post-Stalin period. Naturally these "unbelieving" Party members were also keen to exploit every chance to weaken the Kremlin dictatorship over "the Party".

All countries under Communist rule have a minority of first-class citizens and a majority of second-class. The non-Party citizens could not take the initiative in various revolutionary

actions for the simple reason that as second-class citizens they had no opportunity to do so. All the lesser and smaller executive posts in all walks of life were and are filled by Communists. The personnel files of non-Party citizens state clearly that they can work only in category "B" positions. Editors and publishers of newspapers, of literary weeklies; directors of printing presses; army officers from major upwards; directors of scientific institutes, factories, kolkhozes, theatres, etc., must be Party members. If a literary weekly "revolted" by publishing "anti-Party" articles, such a decision could be taken and carried out only by Communists: editors, publishers, directors of printing presses.

The pre-revolutionary ferment in Poland and Hungary was characterised by the demand of rebellious Party members to depose the "reactionary" Communists in the leadership (the local Stalins) and to replace them by "progressive" anti-Stalinist Communists like Gomulka or Imre Nagy.

The fight between the "reactionaries" and "progressives" went on also in the Soviet Communist Party. Unfortunately for the progressive Soviet Communists (and maybe for the world) there was no "progressive" and uncompromised anti-Stalinist leader in the Soviet Union. Stalin had killed them all.

(At this time some students of the Communist affairs both inside the Soviet Union and in the outside world, simultaneously and knowing nothing of each other, coined the phrase: "The Soviet Communist Party is neither Communist nor a Party." As Khrushchev did not produce a new creed and Party members were forbidden by Khrushchev to produce one, it seems that this definition was valid for that period.)

Right after the Twentieth Congress and all through the summer and autumn of 1956 the literary revolt went on with varying intensity. Polish, Hungarian, Chinese "freedom-writings" were translated or circulated in typewritten copies. The various literary thaws strengthened each other. All over the Soviet world there were isolated instances of strikes (all strikes are, of course, illegal), demonstrations of university students and heated debates not ordered by the Party. The ferment was also strengthened by the various concessions which the Communist governments went on to make. The rehabilitation of unjustly imprisoned persons—and nations—went on.

Unjustly fired or imprisoned workers were returning to their factories, professors to their universities and scientific institutes. *Everyday life provided constant reminders of the infamy*—for the re-introduction of which attempts were already afoot. It was an explosive situation.

Dudintsev's *Not By Bread Alone*—one of the scores of thaw novels—was published by *Novy Mir* in the middle of 1956 in three instalments. On October 22, 1956, the Writers' Union called a routine discussion meeting of the novel in its Moscow building. No audience was expected but hours before the appointed time such a crowd of enthusiastic readers besieged the hall that police had to be called out. The discussion turned into a demonstration.

On the very same day demonstrations were going on in various parts of the Communist world, the most important ones being in Poland and Hungary.

Both Khrushchev in agreeing to read the anti-Stalin tract and those who forced him to do so, showed little foresight. It was not a well-calculated, premeditated action. But the developments attendant upon it were so obvious that the Kremlin leadership saw what was coming. In September and early October 1956 the MVD forces and Red Army divisions took part in many rather unusual "autumn manoeuvres". It was unusual for tank divisions to "manoeuvre" in the very close vicinity of the cities of the Soviet and satellite empire. It was an unusual coincidence that the MVD brigades, tanks, riot-trucks, flame-throwers and all, were also "manoeuvring" near the tank divisions.

The Kremlin made feverish preparations for possible and probable explosions to come. Khrushchev was aware of the danger. Since the Twentieth Congress he had done everything to turn the tide. The re-Stalinisation he had started made the situation even more explosive.

Anna Kamienska, the Polish poetess, in an unforgettable poem called *Disquiet*, and published in the Warsaw *Nowa Kultura*, of August 26, 1956, acutely diagnosed the situation in the Communist world. People, she wrote, are "*in a delirium of impossible possibilities*".

Everybody was in this delirium. Khrushchev, the would-be

"bloodless dictator" was experimenting with the impossible possibility of controlled freedom of speech, of centrally directed "spontaneous democratisation", of driving people to work by a prudent mixture of carrot and stick. The peoples of the Communist world were clamouring for freedom in security police controlled societies; for national independence *within* the Soviet orbit. To revolt against the Soviet armed forces in the age of tanks and jet-planes was just as impossible as not to revolt against the infamy.

In Poland, where Adam Wazyk's *Poem for Adults* was published in 1955, there was a general attack against everything Khrushchev stood for. The leading periodical of the Polish revolution, *Po Prostu*, attacked on a very broad front. One example will suffice for this revolt of Communists. The Communist editors of the periodical published an article by the Communist economist, Edward Lipinski:

Marx and Lenin did not create a complete theory of Socialist economy and they did not analyse the conditions which ensure the successful operation of stimulations and incentives to progress, to growth and development. . . . Centralised planning . . . leads eventually to the omnipotence of bureaucracy and to political autocracy. . . . The nationalisation of land does not bring us one step nearer to Socialism . . . the kolkhozes . . . [are] crying examples of the inferiority of pseudo-Socialist economy, when compared to capitalism. (*Po Prostu*, September 9, 1956.)

In the Polish *Sejm*, the equivalent of the Supreme Soviet, the government was criticised for not allowing parliamentary discussion of the Poznan riots and demands were made that the government should be controlled by the parliament.

The rebellious Communists in the apparatus and even the Central Committee demanded the reinstatement of Wladislaw Gomulka, one of the very few surviving leaders who could be described in the terminology of this chronicle as a "real or idealist Communist". Son of a worker and born in 1905, Gomulka joined the CP as a young man and served many prison terms for his beliefs. In 1936 he was luckily sentenced to seven years' imprisonment. He was safely in a capitalist prison in 1938 when Stalin liquidated the Polish Communist Party and killed most of its leaders. When war started in 1939, he was released, took part in the defence of Warsaw and later organised

the Communist underground. After the outbreak of the German-Soviet war, Khrushchev's partisan-liaison officers arrived by parachute, started to spy against the non-Communist Polish resistance army and denounced some of its members to the Gestapo. In 1943 when the leading Soviet agents were killed in action, Gomulka again took over leadership, discovered the collaboration between the Soviet agents and the Gestapo, and took the necessary steps to end it. After the war when Soviet armies occupied Poland, Gomulka was too popular in the Party to be deposed. He remained first secretary and became Deputy Premier. He was an opponent of the Soviet Marshal Rokossovsky. This officer of Polish origin was instructed by Stalin to become Polish again and act as his watchdog.

Gomulka, a believing "real Communist", was at the same time an ardent patriot and a follower of his own convictions and conscience. His heresy can best be illustrated by a statement of his in the Party monthly, *Nowe Drogi*, April 1957:

We have chosen our own Polish road to development. . . . Along this road, and under such conditions, *the dictatorship of a single party is neither essential nor has it any purpose*. . . . Poland can and will follow her own path.

After Stalin's break with Tito, the "rightist deviationist, bourgeois-nationalist" Gomulka was ousted from his posts in the Party and the government. His arrest only came in July 1951. Gomulka refused to confess and was not executed. On the Christmas of 1954 he was released. This was an open secret till April 1956 when his release was made public.

His past record makes it obvious why the rebellious Communists and the non-Communist intellectuals fought for Gomulka. They wanted him to replace the Polish Stalinists.

In this dangerous situation the Polish Politbureau leaders wanted to reinforce their régime by co-opting Gomulka. The latter made these conditions: 1. He must be first secretary. 2. New elections must take place for the Politbureau. 3. Marshal Rokossovsky, the chief Soviet agent, must be ousted from the Politbureau. His conditions were not undemocratic, because he knew that if the Central Committee could vote freely, all the Gomulka-men would be elected.

In September 1956 the then first secretary, Ochab, and Premier Cyrankiewicz were convinced that only by fulfilling Gomulka's conditions could they save the Communist régime. Cyrankiewicz had already taken a very grave step in August, when he placed the Polish security police troops (a veritable army) under the command of General Komar, a friend of Gomulka and a former victim of Stalinist purges.

On October 15 it was announced that the Polish Political Bureau *in Gomulka's presence* decided that on October 19 a Central Committee Plenum would be held. The defeated Stalinists in the Politbureau reported to Moscow and next day Khrushchev sent an urgent invitation to all Politbureau members and to Gomulka to visit Moscow at once. These however *refused to go*.

The Soviet army manoeuvres in the vicinity of the cities became more intensive. Rokossovsky started to move Polish army formations against Warsaw. In answer General Komar's security troops occupied the approaches of Warsaw and took up positions around important buildings in the capital. We know from Polish newspaper accounts and broadcasts after the event, that the workers of the largest factories in Warsaw and other cities, the shipyard workers at Gdansk and the university students joined the pro-Gomulka forces. Loyal groups of workers and students were armed. Many declarations were made to the effect that the workers and students were ready to defend *their* Central Committee (with a majority of Gomulka supporters).

The Polish Stalinist leaders made their preparations too. From the October 26 broadcast of Gdansk Radio we know that a military coup was planned and a black-list of seven hundred progressive Communists had been prepared. These would have been arrested the minute the Soviet army started its action. Soviet troops were on the move from the Ukraine, from East Prussia and from East Germany.

On Friday, October 19, 1956, the Plenum of the Polish Central Committee met to elect the new anti-Stalinist Politbureau. But Ochab, the then first secretary, proposed a postponement, announcing the unexpected arrival of the Moscow leaders:

A delegation of the Soviet Presidium, composed of *Comrades Khrushchev, Kaganovich, Mikoyan and Molotov* arrived in Warsaw

this morning. The delegation wishes to conduct talks with our Politbureau.

But the Central Committee insisted that this delegation should negotiate with the *new* Politbureau, and against the violent opposition of the Stalinists, proceeded to elect Gomulka and his associates, ousting Marshal Rokossovsky and the other Stalinists. This new Politbureau then went to meet the Russians. The ensuing scene was reported by Philippe Ben in *Le Monde*, November 22, 1956. As everything published subsequently in Poland bears out this report, its essence should be quoted. On first meeting the Poles, Khrushchev lost his temper. He shouted:

We have shed our blood to liberate this country, and now you want to hand it over to the Americans. But in this you will not succeed! This will not happen!

Seeing Gomulka, Khrushchev turned to Ponomarenko, the Soviet ambassador: “And who might *that* be?” Gomulka promptly answered: “I am Gomulka, whom you kept in jail for three years.”

At six p.m. on the same day the Central Committee Plenum met again to be informed by Ochab that

conversations between our Politbureau and the Soviet delegation, which were conducted in a *down to earth atmosphere*, have lasted several hours. . . . The development in the situation . . . *causes a deep anxiety among our Soviet comrades*. As our Soviet comrades somewhat unexpectedly decided to fly to Warsaw and are anxious to return as soon as possible, we would like to continue our talks tonight and the Politbureau suggests that the Plenum be adjourned till tomorrow morning.

From the subsequent reports to the Central Committee, and from speeches made by Zawadzki, Gomulka, Ochab and Cyrankiewicz, what happened during the Polish-Soviet discussions can be pieced together. Khrushchev insisted that Marshal Rokossovsky should be elected or co-opted to the Politbureau along with other Stalinists; that anti-Soviet and anti-Party propaganda should cease; that the Politbureau should refrain from pursuing a rightist-nationalist line, *or else!*

But during the second session a sudden turn came. Khrushchev suddenly turned friendly, comradely and declared that

the Soviet Party did not want to interfere in the affairs of the Polish Politbureau. They should discuss later the question of Polish-Soviet relationship in a calmer atmosphere. The delegation departed next dawn.

The reason was no secret in Poland. *Marshal Rokossovsky informed Khrushchev that the Polish army refused to obey his orders to move against the cities and against General Komar's troops.*

Khrushchev and his allies, Kaganovich, Mikoyan and Molotov—for now that the entire régime was in danger they were truly his allies—had indeed many anxieties. The situation was just as explosive in Hungary, and there were alarming signs in East Germany and Czechoslovakia. *Having met force, Khrushchev retreated.* He did not want to take the risk of Soviet divisions fighting against the Polish army, the Polish workers, all of Poland.

Radio Gdansk (in the hands of the shipyard workers) reported on October 26:

Suspicious troop movements started now; and again Zeran workers [in Warsaw], who have many vehicles at their disposal, sent comrades to places practically all over Poland, so that *the progressive forces in the Central Committee* knew everything about these troop movements. What attitude the troops adopted, you know. *When orders were issued to staff and political officers, they answered simply that these orders would be ignored.* They said that they were *with the people* and they would defend the working class!

On October 20 Gomulka as the new first secretary made his report. He painted an all round picture of "the evil years", of the fake achievements of the industrial and agricultural plan; of the muddle, the bureaucratic crimes; of Soviet exploitation; of the crimes against individuals. And he said:

The Poznan workers used the strike weapon and came out to demonstrate in the streets on that Black Thursday in June and exclaimed in powerful voice: "That's enough! This cannot go on!" . . . The attempt to present the painful tragedy of Poznan as the work of imperialist agents and provocateurs was a great political *naïvety* . . . Comrades, the causes of the Poznan tragedy and of the deep dissatisfaction of the entire working class lie within us, in the Party leadership and the government.

Gomulka then announced the "Polish road to Socialism", the essence of which seemed to realise what people all over the

Soviet world were hoping for: *that the stranglehold on their lives would be eased.*

The revolt of the Communists—or, if we prefer it, "progressive Communists"—succeeded in Poland thanks to the readiness of the leaders to turn to the workers and to the people in general. They were not forced to put this threat into practice because Khrushchev and Rokossovsky were on the spot, and they realised that all Poland would rise instantly and enthusiastically against the "reactionary Communists" and the Soviet army backing them.

In Hungary, the rebellious Communists were at first too weak to effect changes in their Politbureau, and later the alarm and vacillation of Khrushchev and his Budapest agents caused bloodshed—and the workers, students, all Hungary rebelled.

The "Hungarian Gomulka" Imre Nagy—Gomulka used to be called the "Polish Nagy"—was not in prison during the Stalin purges and his life-story follows a different course, but basically he was the same type as Gomulka: an ardent Communist, but a Hungarian patriot, who resisted and criticised extreme collectivisation, and always demanded a more democratic, more flexible policy. Curiously enough, Imre Nagy came to power in 1953 due to the direct intervention of the Soviet Presidium. In June 1953, shortly after the workers' risings in East Germany when the situation in Hungary was most explosive, the Hungarian Politbureau was instructed to fly to Moscow bringing with them Imre Nagy, whom they had ousted from leadership some years ago.

Matyas Rakosi was then first secretary and Premier of Hungary. His record and behaviour equalled in every respect that of Stalin. He was "the wise father of the Hungarian people", who had murdered proportionally as many Hungarians as Stalin had Russians. Now Rakosi was told to hand over the Premiership to Imre Nagy. When Rakosi had misgivings, Khrushchev shouted: "They will chase you away with pitchforks from Hungary." Then he added: "We do not want the direction of the Party and the State to remain concentrated in the hands of one man or in a small group. This is not desirable."*

* Imre Nagy: *On Communism* and T. Meray: *Sixteen Days That Shook the Kremlin.*)

Imre Nagy then became Premier and introduced his New Course. Rakosi remained First Secretary and sabotaged Nagy's policies with his apparatus. After Malenkov had been ousted, Rakosi demoted Nagy and replaced him by one of his own stooges. Later in 1955 Imre Nagy was expelled from the Politbureau and the Centcom and in November from the Party. These decisions were also taken in the Kremlin, mainly by Khrushchev himself.

During his fight against Malenkov and other oppositionists, Khrushchev had used most of the satellite Communist leaders to strengthen his own position. Rakosi, in this sense, was his own man, against the "Malenkovite" Nagy.

But the thaw in Hungary after the Twentieth Congress in Moscow and the anti-Stalin revelations, became increasingly more violent. The revolt of the "progressive Communists" was perhaps even more widespread and more violent than in Poland. The difference was however that there were *very few* "progressives" in the Hungarian Central Committee and none in the Politbureau.

It was often admitted later, that had the Party members had a chance to vote by secret ballot, Imre Nagy and his faction would have won with an immense majority. The middle and lower apparatchiki were mostly for Nagy. The Communist intellectuals, the university students and the workers were for Nagy. The university branch of the Communist Youth Organisation founded the famous Petöfi Club. Alexander Petöfi, the greatest Hungarian poet of the century, was also the hero and martyr of the 1848-9 war of liberty which was crushed by tsarist Russian troops. By choosing Petöfi, a liberal and patriotic revolutionary, the rebellious Communist university students gave a clear indication of their aims. The Petöfi Club organised *free discussions* for historians, economists, philosophers' journalists, etc. These discussion-meetings were so wildly popular that the audience arrived hours before the start and some thousands could not get in.

On June 27, 1956, the Petöfi Club held a discussion on the press in the very large building of the Army Officers' Club in the heart of Budapest. This was an obvious indication that the army officers were backing the rebellious students and writers. Tibor Dery, the leading novelist and many progressive Communist writers and journalists spoke and the meeting which

lasted from the afternoon till three-thirty a.m. next morning, ended with a unanimous demand to oust the Stalinists and reinstate Imre Nagy.

On June 29 Rakosi summoned the Central Committee. He prepared a black-list of 400 progressives (in Poland the number was 700) who should be arrested immediately. He wanted to ban the Petöfi Club, and the *Irodalmi Ujsag*, the writers' periodical which was playing a leading part in the revolutionary ferment. The first to be arrested was Imre Nagy.

The Soviet ambassador reported to Khrushchev that if Rakosi was not stopped, there would be a revolution in Hungary. Some hours later Mikoyan arrived by a jet, went to the Central Committee meeting, deposed Rakosi and replaced him by Rakosi's second in command, the hated Erno Gero. *Had Khrushchev then replaced Rakosi by Imre Nagy . . .* But, it is better to exclude *ifs* from a historical chronicle.

It might be stated, however, that people were more realistic even during the post-Stalin "delirium of impossible possibilities" than Khrushchev and his Kremlin entourage. The popular demand for the reinstatement of the Gomulkas and Imre Nagys was by no means due to any popularity of Communism. But the people of Poland and Hungary and the other countries realised that this was the most they could hope for *in the circumstances*. The believing progressive Communists wanted to go as far in democratisation as possible without provoking a general attack by the Soviet armies. The disenchanted Communists (by now the majority of Party members in Poland and Hungary) and the non-Communist majority wanted to back them up. They too knew that there were limits.

It was not wise to provoke them into even more "impossibly possible situations". But this is what was done in Hungary. The writers had their say:

In this country where the poet can write only by stealth, where the law becomes lawlessness . . . it was impossible not to notice how the *promised Paradise was turned into hell*. (Imre Takacs, *Irodalmi Ujsag*, April 7, 1956.)

Communist writers and the non-Communists released from jail exposed all aspects of Rakosi's murderous tyranny. Workers

and students wanted the New Line enunciated at the Soviet Twentieth Congress to be applied in Hungary too. Rakosi, and later Gero, were forced to confiscate issues of *Pravda* and of Communist periodicals from elsewhere in the satellite world, lest the Hungarians should be infected by the free spirit of certain articles. The rebellious Communists knew that their Stalinist leadership was out of step with the ostensible developments in the Soviet Party. In rebelling, they thought, they had the Kremlin's backing. And although the Soviet Embassy and the entire Hungarian press kept Khrushchev and his advisers well informed they were still reluctant to reinstate Imre Nagy. Khrushchev did everything on October 19 to stop Gomulka's coming to power. His line was the same as regards Imre Nagy in Hungary. Only the Hungarian Centcom could have acted. But this body consisted of frightened Rakosi-Gero stooges. They were more afraid of Gero's security police than of the growing revolutionary ferment in the country. The wisdom and prudence, the level of information and the foresight of Khrushchev, the Kremlin and of all the Party headquarters in the satellite empire are best demonstrated by *what they did not know* a few weeks before the Polish and Hungarian revolutions. They did not know that if a break came, the overwhelming majority of Communists, of workers, students, of the army and ordinary police, of the entire population would turn instantly against them.

On October 19, Khrushchev thought that he just had to issue orders through Rokossovsky to the Polish army, and Gomulka would be finished. On October 23, Khrushchev and Gero thought they just had to call out the ordinary police and the army against the students and workers and everything would be settled.

Gomulka's speech on October 20 announcing the independent Polish Road to Socialism, was reported by the Hungarian press. Many details were reported by phone to student bodies and to the writers. It was decided that a sympathy demonstration should be organised on October 23, as a protest against Stalinism, and in the name of Polish-Hungarian friendship and a New Course in Hungary.

The 1848-9 Hungarian war of liberty, crushed by the Russians, had many heroes in addition to the poet Petöfi. One was General Bem, a Pole who had joined the Hungarian war of

liberty and became one of its outstanding commanders. The students decided to march from the Petöfi statue on the left bank of the Danube, to that of General Bem on the other side. The Minister of the Interior first prohibited the demonstration. But when the students started to march, last minute permission was given. The demonstrators, as they marched through the city, were joined by workers, by passers-by, by everybody. Their numbers grew to 200,000 strong. The march lasted for hours. The revolutionary demands—still within the well-known *given circumstances*—were read to the multitude.

The demonstrators committed some imprudent acts. They tore out of the national flags the Rakosi-Stalinist emblem of the hammer and wheat-sheaf and replaced it by the old national emblem. They shouted slogans like

“Independence, liberty—Polish-Hungarian friendship!”

“Foreign troops should go home!”

“Perish Stalinism!”

The Writers’ Unions and the various student bodies composed demands, consisting of twelve, sixteen or more points. These demands were mimeographed and posted up everywhere in the capital.

In the evening the crowds went to the enormous Parliament Square and demanded to hear Imre Nagy. They shouted for him for hours. At eight p.m. the Stalinist first secretary, Gero, who had returned that day from a visit to Tito, made a Stalinist speech against the demonstration. He gave stiff orders to shoot to security police troops guarding the main governmental and other important buildings. When about the same time a student delegation tried to enter the Radio Building and have their demands broadcast, permission was denied and the security guards fired at the demonstrators.

At the same time ordinary police and army units were called out against the demonstrators, as *a safety measure of the régime*. But the ordinary police and the army either handed over their weapons to the students and workers or joined them. Just as in Warsaw, hundreds of truck-loads of factory workers arrived from the suburbs to help. The demonstration of progressive Communists and their sympathisers for the reinstatement of Imre Nagy and for a New Course, similar to Gomulka’s in

Poland, was turned by the rigidity of the Hungarian Stalinists into a revolution.

The Hungarian revolution was a lesson to fighting factions in the Kremlin and other Party headquarters: if the people are given the chance to join in the fight between Party factions, *they start out by backing the progressive Communists and finish by crushing the Communist régime.* As the Communist steel-workers of Csepel overthrew the Stalin-statue in Budapest, and built a bonfire on the remnants, a bonfire fed by their Party cards, a further lesson was driven home: The working class, Communist Party members included, will instantly turn against "their" Party if in the delirium of impossible possibilities they too lose their prudence.

Communist leaders—and the West—were given an astonishing lesson by the youth and children of Hungary. Twelve to fifteen-year-old boys and girls who threw home-made petrol-bombs at Soviet tanks everywhere in Hungary, had known nothing but "indoctrination" throughout their entire lives. Why did they fight everywhere spontaneously, and in very large numbers, often led by boys or girls of their own age? Why did they fight resolutely against the infamy? How did they recognise it as infamy if indoctrination is such a marvellous instrument? Indoctrination of youth was proved by the Hungarian revolt to be one of the biggest fiascos of Marxism-Leninism. (One to understand this lesson was Khrushchev.)

The Budapest Central Committee, the Budapest Soviet Embassy, and even Khrushchev in the Kremlin, were repeatedly warned that bloodshed and open insurrection could be avoided by the prompt reinstatement of Imre Nagy. And even with the four-day-old lesson of Warsaw clear before them, they still refused. Imre Nagy could not inform the multitude in Parliament Square that he had taken over power. Anger grew. It was then that news came of the massacre at the Radio Building. The revolution was on and there was no turning back.

It was not until the following day that Mikoyan and Suslov were sent by Khrushchev to Budapest to depose Gero and replace him by Imre Nagy. But Nagy was still kept a prisoner at Party headquarters for nearly two days. Stalinists were in charge. They called in the Soviet army. The result was the same as Marshal Rokossovsky had expected four days earlier

in Poland. The army joined the revolution. All of Hungary fought against the Soviet tanks most valiantly in the industrial suburbs of Budapest and other cities. Soviet armour was again fighting—as in East Germany—the united working class of a foreign country.

There were some nasty shocks for the Kremlin and the Hungarian Stalinists. When they appealed to the Academy of Political Commissars of the Army, the handpicked young commissar-candidates, sons of trusted apparatchiki, with one accord joined the revolution together with their professors and officers!

The Communist Party disintegrated.

Khrushchev then made a seemingly momentous decision in agreement with all the factions of the Soviet Presidium. On the seventh day of the Hungarian revolution, which Soviet armour had so far been unable to crush, Moscow Radio broadcast the following Soviet government declaration: The Soviet command in Hungary received orders to withdraw their troops from Budapest as soon as the Hungarian government (of Imre Nagy) so desired. The October 30 declaration also stated that the Soviet government was ready to start discussions on the general position of Soviet troops in Hungary.

The seeming victory was short-lived. On November 4 the Soviet army launched an all-out attack on Budapest and then on the rest of the country. In the next seven days, armed resistance was crushed. For three weeks there followed a nation-wide, complete general strike in the country as a protest against Soviet occupation. At the end of November, Imre Nagy and his associates were given a safe conduct to leave their refuge at the Yugoslav Embassy. They were promptly kidnapped by the Soviet MVD. In 1958 they were executed.

XII

HOW MR. KHRUSHCHEV WAS EDUCATED BY THE WEST

"With regard to the ideology of capitalist and Socialist countries, we have never concealed that there will be a struggle in this field, an ideological struggle. . . . Some people reproach me for allegedly changing my point of view, since I once said that if an atomic war came about it would be capitalism that would perish in that war. This I repeat today. But we think that *capitalism should be destroyed not by means of war . . . but through an ideological and economic struggle. . . .*"

(Khrushchev in his television interview to the Columbia Broadcasting System, June 2, 1957.)

"We should be very poor revolutionaries if, in the great proletarian war for emancipation and Socialism, we did not know how to utilise every popular movement *against each separate disaster caused by imperialism, in order to sharpen and extend the crisis.*"

(Lenin, *Selected Works*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1937, Vol. V, p. 305.)

ON November 4, 1956, while the artillery and tanks of the Red Army ring round Budapest were thundering, Budapest Radio broadcast its last desperate cry for help. It was addressed neither to governments nor to statesmen or politicians:

This is the Hungarian Writers' Union. We are speaking to all writers, scientists, writers' and scientists' associations of the world, and to the intellectual leaders of all countries. Our time is limited. You know all the facts. No need to expand them. Long live Hungary. Help the Hungarian writers, scientists, workers, peasants and intelligentsia. Help! Help! Help!

Why was this last-minute S.O.S. not addressed to the governments of the free world?

Why was there no last-minute appeal to the United Nations Organisation?

Why was it that the desperate people of Budapest whose city was even then being transformed into the graveyard of a revolution, saw only one hope: the help of the public opinion of the world?

The Hungarian revolutionaries did not expect armed help during their first fight against the Soviet divisions. But they expected some action—as the vast literature of their revolution clearly demonstrates. The free world did not want to precipitate war. Since 1947, when the fate of the European satellites became increasingly clear, one of the main hopes was some change, or changes in the Soviet system. Some hoped for a gradual liberalisation and democratisation of their régime. Others waited for some indication that the peoples under Communism were turning against the system. Since the risings of the East German workers in 1953, since the Poznan riots and the Polish revolt in 1956, it was obvious how the people felt. The fact that millions escaped from East Germany to the West, voting by their feet against Communism, was another indication.

Then came the Hungarian revolt. The embassies and legations of the Western powers and of the non-committed countries of Asia were present in Hungary. More than 700 journalists from all parts of the world furnished a corps of trained eye-witnesses. Even Mr. Nehru declared: "The great majority of the Hungarian people wanted a change of government, revolted, and were suppressed, after very brave fighting, by Soviet forces." *The facts were clear!* On October 23, 1956, it was the *entire* Hungarian people that fought a war of liberty against their Stalinist oppressors and against the Soviet divisions backing them.

From the Twentieth Party Congress in Moscow onwards the Soviet and the satellite press furnished almost daily masses of proof that not only in the satellites but in all the republics of the Soviet Union people were exasperated with the dictatorship of the Party apparatus. Poznan, the Polish revolt, and finally Hungary drove the lesson home that Stalin's panicky heirs were *in a weak position*. All the Western governments, all the United Nations could not help knowing that the anti-Stalin wave was faced by a Kremlin leadership engaged in a desperate power-struggle.

The opponent's general weakness, and the enormous gap in his defences created by the Hungarian revolt, were not exploited. Until the Hungarian revolt, the Western adherents of a passive, defensive policy were able to argue that the Western governments could not and should not interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign countries. The principle of *absolute* non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, is of course a dangerous and untenable principle. Absolute non-interference means that all peoples always belong to their momentary governments. It means that if a totalitarian dictator usurps power through a military coup, from next day on he is the legal representant of "his people". On the basis of absolute non-interference, the war against Hitler and his Nazi régime was wrong.

But once the Imre Nagy government had been recognised by the Soviet government; after the Soviet government had conducted diplomatic and military talks with the Hungarian revolutionary government, after Moscow Radio and the entire Soviet press reported the Soviet government's instruction to the Soviet Command in Hungary to negotiate with the Nagy government, no one could pretend that the latter was not a real government according to international law. Moreover, the action of the Hungarian people showed that this government had universal support in the country for its policy of national independence and neutrality and for its decision to renounce the Warsaw Military Pact. And this legal government asked the United Nations for help. Prompt *political* action was expected. It was expected that the Secretary General of UNO and a United Nation commission would arrive in Budapest a few hours after this declaration. It was expected that the United Nations and/or the leading Western powers would promptly guarantee Hungarian neutrality and independence and let the Soviet government know at once the grave consequences of any step violating it. It was expected that India, Burma and other recently liberated nations would join in these actions and demonstrate that they stood for the self-determination of all peoples, not only of *some* Asian and African peoples.

"If" is a word which historians should avoid. The undeniable fact however must be emphasised that in October 1956 the Kremlin dictatorship over the peoples of the USSR and the

satellites was in a particularly weak position and this weakness was not used as a chance for prompt, determined and united *political* action. The past record and the future actions of Khrushchev and the Kremlin leaders make it unlikely that they would have given an order to attack Budapest *if* an authoritative UNO commission had been there, and *if* Hungarian independence and neutrality had been unequivocally guaranteed.

Comparatively scant attention has been paid so far to international affairs in this chronicle of Khrushchev's political life. Some general remarks are warranted here.

After Stalin's death the outside world, and at times even certain Western governments, were interested to see what kind of men Stalin's heirs would turn out to be. The world seemed to sit back with the passive interest of TV viewers to watch developments in the Soviet Union, *seemingly unaware of the fact that these would be also shaped by the actions—or inactions—of the outside world.*

With their instinctive and spontaneous mass-reactions, the peoples of the Soviet world influenced events in certain directions. The dictator died; and the simple common sense of the people told them that they could and should use the ensuing uncertainty to win some freedom for themselves. The passivity of the outside world was puzzling for Stalin's panicky heirs who expected and dreaded some cunning manoeuvres. They preached all the time that the imperialists never ceased sending spies and saboteurs to their lands. They expected and feared that the restive Soviet people would now receive all sorts of direct and indirect outside help; that there would be dangerous political moves; that the great opportunity might even temporarily unite the ever-squabbling capitalist countries.

The Teheran summit meeting between Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin in 1943 had taught Stalin and his Politbureau that Lenin was right: the Western allies were not united. President Roosevelt was apparently not forewarned by his experts and advisers that with Soviet statesmen the techniques and manoeuvres of normal, non-Soviet political life should not be used at all. President Roosevelt was not warned or did not heed the warning that the one thing which must be avoided at all costs

was to give an impression of disunity among the Western statesmen.

We know from such memoirs as *The Roosevelt I Knew* by Mrs. Perkins, from *Closing the Ring* by Sir Winston Churchill and from other sources, that Mr. Roosevelt tried to establish a warm personal contact with Stalin by pretending to intrigue with him against the "grumpy Churchill". Mr. Roosevelt first of all accepted Stalin's invitation to live at the Soviet Embassy at Teheran, while Mr. Churchill lived naturally at the British Embassy. With the invitation Stalin sought to isolate Churchill from Roosevelt. In order to humour Stalin, Roosevelt scarcely saw Churchill alone during the conference. He did not want to offend the Russians by talking to Churchill in English which they did not understand. Stalin was however still cold and reserved. Then Roosevelt had an idea. He told Mrs. Perkins that one day "on my way to the conference room . . . we caught up with Winston and I had just a moment to say to him: 'Winston, I hope you won't be sore with me for what I am going to do.'"

Roosevelt did this: As soon as he entered the conference-room, he talked privately to Stalin in a "chummy and confidential way" and he told Stalin in an interpreted whisper: "Winston is cranky this morning, he got out of bed on the wrong side" . . . what followed was told by Roosevelt to Mrs. Perkins:

A vague smile passed over Stalin's eyes, and I decided I was on the right track. As soon as I sat down at the conference table, I began to tease Churchill about his Britishness, about John Bull, about his cigars, about his habits. It began to register with Stalin. Winston got red and scowled, and the more he did so, the more Stalin smiled. Finally Stalin broke into a deep, hearty guffaw, and for the first time in three days I saw light. I kept it up until Stalin was laughing with me, and it was then that I called him Uncle Joe.

Roosevelt then pretended to prefer a united front with Stalin against Churchill. When Churchill protested against Stalin's proposal that after the war 50,000 German army officers should be shot, Roosevelt jokingly remarked that maybe 49,000 executions would be enough. Then Elliot Roosevelt said from the end of the table that he was sure the American army

would support Stalin's proposal. Churchill left the table.

This incident was smoothed out later, but Stalin was convinced by his personal encounter with the two leaders of the West, that the British and Americans were indeed squabbling and that the Leninist teaching about their inevitable contradictions and clashes was right. No wonder he guffawed with pleasure and relief.

The Kremlin boss who all his life made frantic efforts to present a monolithic unity to the outside world, was given a mistaken but lasting conviction of the disunity of his adversaries. The Teheran conference was at length "evaluated" for the other Communist leaders. They, among them Khrushchev, learnt what to expect.

Roosevelt sought to establish friendly, personal, human contact with Stalin so that afterwards he should be able to write to him or speak to him on the phone as man to man. His experts and advisers did not tell him, or he did not heed them, that in the world of the Kremlin there are no friendships, no human ties; that personal aspects do not count.

From then on all symptoms of Anglo-American squabbles only strengthened the Kremlin's belief in Western disunity.

At that time the outside world had a mistaken impression of Stalin. He was thought to be, in international politics, most aggressive, almost trigger-happy. He was imagined—somewhat inconsequently—as a man of immense foresight, great astuteness, whose every action was a well-calculated chess move. Even Mr. Dulles thought that when Mao Tse-tung finally came to power in 1949 over all China this was the result of Stalin's planning and sinister machinations over a quarter of a century. The fact was that Stalin had an exaggerated opinion of the strength and might of the forces of capitalism; he always avoided military conflict when he could; and the last thing he wanted was a Communist China.

The Comintern archives are full of documents showing how Stalin instructed or advised various Communist Parties to remain on the defensive. All through 1925, 1926 and partly through 1927 Stalin instructed the Chinese Communists to be obedient to Chang Kai-shek. After the second world war he told Mao Tse-tung that the Chinese Communist revolution "had no prospects". He revealed this to Mr. Kardelj, the

Yugoslav Foreign Minister in 1948. In the summer of 1948 Stalin advised the Chinese Communists to continue with partisan warfare but *to refrain from attempts to take the principal cities, or to extend their rule to all China*. Stalin wanted the Chinese Communist partisan armies for their nuisance value. Their warfare forced the United States to send a thousand million dollar's worth of arms to Chang Kai-shek, thereby "weakening American imperialism".

Stalin's attitude to the Greek partisans of General Markos, and to Tito's men in Yugoslavia was similar. It was not a dramatic success for Stalin that China and Yugoslavia became Communist-ruled countries. It happened *against his instructions* and was a source of great anxiety for him.

The mistaken Western impression of Stalin's political personality and his actions, is partly explained by the secretiveness and complete isolation of the Soviet régime. In the Western world full information on most events is taken for granted. In the Soviet world great care is taken that there should be a total lack of information. By total control of press and radio; by isolating Russia from the outside world; by isolating Soviet officials from any human contact with their opposite numbers abroad, leakages are made almost impossible. Great care is taken to present monolithic unity. Just because of this lack of information concerning details, the Soviet leaders appear mysterious and often far more able and astute than they really are. Stalin was of course not such a coward, was not so primitive, not such a gross military bungler as the secret anti-Stalin tract would have it. But neither was he such a political genius and devilishly cunning manipulator of the Communist movements of the outside world, as some Western commentators made him out to be.

Khrushchev learnt the tactics and strategy of political struggle in the Party apparatus. For decades his survival depended on inspired improvisations, on the swift exploitation of any mistake or weak point of his opponent or opponents. The Marxist-Leninist ideal is *the fully rational man*, engaged in a fight for the global victory of Communism. The Party, the apparatus, the activists constantly conduct "fights" for or against someone or something. There are "battles" of production, "resolute struggles" for the raising of efficiency,

Communists are supposed to "fight" for less waste of paper in the office, for punctual arrival at the factories, for better organisation of working conditions. The peace councils "fight for peace". The entire mental climate and folklore is that of all kinds of properly planned "warfare". In these battles, campaigns, struggles and fights there are strategical and tactical aims. Advances and temporary retreats are planned. In the Soviet military schools chess is a compulsory subject. But chess is also a national game. To defeat the enemy with well-calculated and properly planned moves; to exploit promptly all weak points in the opponent's defences; to make full use of all sudden advantages—the chess-player's mentality and method are the ideals of all apparatchiki.

To begin with Stalin's heirs played a defensive game on the chess-board of international affairs. Relaxation and peaceful co-existence were cultivated. Khrushchev himself was and is a pragmatist in Marxism-Leninism. Marxist "theses", and the dogmatic approach are used by him only on occasions when it suits his aims. In foreign affairs his approach is often non-ideological.

Asian and African nationalism was encouraged by him. During Stalin's rule, the friendly revolutionary leaders of colonial or freshly liberated countries were expected to learn Marxism-Leninism. Khrushchev's apparatus and diplomatic network did not attempt to force Marxism-Leninism on them. The newly emerging national-revolutionary leaders were taught instead *the art of manipulating the masses*, for which they were grateful. Mass-propaganda, choirs of agitators, techniques of slogans, methods of occupying key positions in the bureaucracy, and the use of political police: these were the principal "articles for export".

Within the general trend of international relaxation, Khrushchev's actions in Europe, in the Middle East and South-East Asia were moves of modern power-politics. The diplomatic moves and economic drives were to strengthen Soviet influence and weaken the position of the Western powers. Khrushchev ceaselessly emphasised that peaceful co-existence should not be mistaken for peaceful *ideological* co-existence. This meant that Marxist-Leninist propaganda and the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist war-of-nerves could go on. Khrushchev's often

quoted remark to the capitalists: *We shall bury you* means: we shall bury you by all means, short of war. If cold war means a generally hostile attitude *and* hostile propaganda, then Khrushchev demands from the West its unilateral cessation, while the Soviet Union and the satellites go on with their "ideologically" firm policy. Khrushchev all the time urges the Communists "never to cease their struggle against all aspects of bourgeois ideology".

This method gives ample field for manoeuvre. Power-politics can be mixed with "ideological struggle". Formal peace with the capitalist powers can be mixed with a propaganda war against all the values and principles these powers stand for.

The very flexibility of this method also means that one can and should retreat whenever one meets stiff resistance. Everything should and is being tried to gain advantages in power-politics—short of war. Ultimatums are delivered—and forgotten if necessary.

In this pragmatic, chess-like method of international politics the actions and inaction of the opponents have a very great influence. Since Stalin's death the Western powers have rarely had the *initiative*. The one resolute, prompt and firm action—the temporary occupation of the Lebanon—was a *reaction* to a series of Soviet moves in the Middle East. (It produced a retreat on the part of Khrushchev, but this is now beside the point.)

In Hungary, the October 30, 1956, Soviet agreement to evacuate Budapest and to negotiate with the revolutionary Nagy-government *now appears* as a move to gain time. Tanks in narrow city streets had proved to be largely ineffective. Facing the united resistance of an entire country, far more troops were needed to crush the revolt. Also there was a great danger—at least Khrushchev and his associates thought so—that the Western powers and the United Nations would do something. The aim of the October 30 declaration was to persuade the Western powers that no swift action was needed.

The Suez intervention, the vacillations of the Indian government and the lack of "monolithic unity" in the free world—persuaded the Kremlin leaders to risk crushing the Hungarian revolt by a desperate *weekend* action. The dangers were very

great. East Germany and Poland were in a rebellious mood. Reports and frantic requests streaming in the Communist headquarters in Czechoslovakia, Roumania and Bulgaria showed that in these countries there were ominous signs also. There were already disturbances in Roumanian Transylvania. *It was feared that if the Hungarians gained their independence with the political help of the West the entire satellite empire would break away from the USSR.* The Soviet army leaders were also anxious to keep the very important Hungarian uranium mines.

The "Suez weekend" (November 3, 1956, was a Saturday) was used to crush the Hungarian revolt. The last report from Budapest was that the Hungarian General Maleter and his military mission were negotiating the evacuation of Soviet troops at the Soviet army headquarters in *Fot*, near Budapest. Late at night General Serov, Khrushchev's secret police chief, arrived and arrested the Hungarian military mission. It was four o'clock on Sunday morning, November 4, when the Soviet army attacked. Khrushchev, counting on the slowness of democratic government machinery, hoped that a Sunday would be enough to crush Hungarian resistance. But resistance went on for seven days, yet nothing happened, save a non-unanimous UNO resolution demanding the immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops and free elections under United Nations supervision. No official announcement was made in Washington, London or Paris that Western "volunteers" were ready to help Hungary (but Moscow and Peking announced that such "volunteers" were ready to help Egypt). No ultimatum was given to Moscow, as if it were accepted practice that ultimatums could be issued only by Moscow. There was no threat of armed intervention, not even a threat of breaking off all cultural and economic ties should the Soviet army not be immediately evacuated from Hungary. The peoples of Hungary and the other satellites were given no serious encouragement.

Khrushchev, trained all his political life to produce at least formal unanimity on important policy decisions, was not faced with grave risks and responsibilities when he pressed for the crushing of the Hungarian revolution. Events proved him right. He suffered a moral defeat as far as Western public opinion was concerned. The Hungarian revolution decimated the Western Communist Parties. For a year or two the West seemed to

remember the lesson of Hungary—that the peoples of the Sino-Soviet world are not enthusiastic supporters of their régimes which suppress them. But soon came the Sputniks, the Luniks, new ultimatums, new relaxations, new drives for co-existence and for summit meetings and the Hungarian revolution was forgotten.

Like Roosevelt, the outside world has given and goes on giving a mistaken impression to the Kremlin rulers. The West seems to be disunited, seems to be constantly on the defensive, seems to lack a creed, an ardent faith; seems to abhor any initiative in the international field. Khrushchev and the Kremlin leaders act, and the world reacts in various ways. Yet, in the last analysis the impression and education given to Khrushchev by the West is misleading. Mankind's wish and insistence to stay human, to live like human beings, to breathe freely, free from fear and bullying, is not expressed in the form of some charter or catechism. It is only *taken for granted*. Any really grave threat to these freedoms would produce a unity more enthusiastic and monolithic than anything the Kremlin rulers can ever hope to achieve in their country.

XIII

“WHEN ONE MAN OWNS THE TRUTH”

“Where cult of personality is present, scientific thought must give way to blind faith, creativity to dogma, public opinion to caprice. The deity must have worshippers and servility. . . . Artistic creativity is inseparable from social initiative, from experimentation. . . . When one man owns the truth, artists are relegated to the role of illustrators and ode-singers.”

(Alexander Kron in *Literaturnaya Moskva*, Vol. II, 1957.)

STALIN secured for himself “the truth” as his exclusive personal property by climbing up on a mountain of corpses. In the new situation after Stalin’s death the Party apparatus alone could secure for Khrushchev the same position. Apart from a few collective murders immediately after Stalin’s death, no blood was shed during Khrushchev’s struggle for power. The reason for this has already been discussed. The peoples of the Soviet Union and the opponents of Khrushchev in the leadership were—and are—effectively silenced by the apparatus of *bloodless* dictatorship. How long the lesson of the Stalin era—if *blood-purges start no one’s life is secure*—will last, is difficult to tell. But during the period from the Twentieth Congress in 1956 till Khrushchev’s American visit in 1959 it was still effective.

This *bloodless* dictatorship was carried through by a new type of purge. The Khrushchevite purges, from Malenkov’s ousting in February 1955 up to the “smashing of the anti-Party conspiracy” during the 1957-9 period, retained many elements of the Stalin-technique. Cases were fabricated, cooked-up charges were made, the “anti-Party” leaders on the top and their adherents throughout the hierarchy were expected to make false confessions. The start was bad. Malenkov in 1955 made an obviously ludicrous confession by admitting manifestly untrue criminal errors. But after the Twentieth Congress the situation changed. During the 1957-9 period Malenkov, Molotov and Kaganovich refused to confess. Up to the time of

writing (autumn 1959) these leaders of an "anti-Party conspiracy" have withstood all invitations to confess to the entirely false charges made against them and Khrushchev could not propose to the Twenty-first Congress in 1959 to have them expelled from the Party and arrested.

Bloodless dictatorship entails this difficulty. The other difficulty is that if people cannot be driven to work by fear, they have to be given incentives. Malenkov's "slandering the Party" with the proposal to produce more consumer goods was nothing more than the recognition of this situation. By not having the power to execute, Khrushchev was forced to take over Malenkov's policy.

The Khrushchevite purges do not kill people. They only annihilate them professionally, politically and at times they force people—like Bulganin—to commit moral suicide. These purges retain an element of fear, so necessary for the technique of dictatorship. The fear of losing one's position overnight, regardless of good and hard work, expert knowledge, past record, talent, everything. The fear of being sent from Moscow or Leningrad or even from the Kremlin, to some of the border republics, into insignificant positions. Molotov, when he takes a walk among the twenty odd buildings of Ulan Bator, the capital city of Mongolia, and strolls between the thousands of felt tents of the valiant but primitive Mongolians, knows very well that he was exiled to a forced place of residence. Malenkov, as the director of an electrical plant, in a place referred to in peasant-language as being "behind God's back", can bask in the knowledge that he never confessed, yet he knows that he was effectively purged, at least for the time being.

The Khrushchevite purges are effective, but not quite satisfying. The tens of thousands of adherents and/or co-victims of the Malenkov, Molotov, Kaganovich and Zhukov purges and their leaders are *alive*. And Mr. Khrushchev must know scores of earthy proverbs about a living enemy being a dangerous enemy.

A bloodless dictatorship is less secure than a bloody one. This truism was the constant background to the improvisations and zig-zags during the 1956-9 period of the Khrushchev era. By the end of this period Khrushchev had fully identified himself with the Party. To disagree with him, to vote against

him, was denounced as a crime against the Party. How he ousted most of his rivals during these years with the use of his apparatus, rounds out the picture of his political personality.

To all intents and purposes, Khrushchev took full responsibility and credit for the anti-Stalin tract he read to the Twentieth Congress. The resolution of that Congress was composed in the spirit of that tract. Yet at the very same Congress he made a series of preparatory steps to annihilate the last vestiges of collective leadership and clear the way for a new cult of personality—his own.

At the Twentieth Congress the Presidium's eleven full members were re-elected, including Malenkov, Molotov and Kaganovich. But six new candidate members were also elected who could be moved up to full membership in the case of the death or ousting of full members. Four of them were Khrushchev's-men, the fifth was Marshal Zhukov. The Central Committee was increased from 126 full and 111 candidate members to 133 and 122 respectively. Most of the new members and candidates were apparatchiki sponsored by Khrushchev. After the Congress he assumed the chairmanship of the newly-created Central Committee Bureau for the Russian Soviet Federative Republic which covers seventy-six per cent of the total area of the USSR, with correspondingly influential organisations.

While the struggle for power continued, Khrushchev went on appeasing the Soviet population. In March 1956 a six-hour working-day was established for Saturdays and the eve of holidays; pensions were increased; the working days of young people aged sixteen to eighteen was reduced from eight to six hours. In September, for the first time in Soviet history, a minimum wage for industrial workers was established. About eight million workers were to receive instead of 200-250 roubles 300-350 roubles a month. (200-250 roubles a month meant in terms of Soviet purchasing power hardly more than £1, or \$2.80 a week.)

Release and rehabilitation of innocently imprisoned people went on.

In international affairs, peaceful co-existence was stressed. Khrushchev and Bulganin visited Britain in April 1956, after a reconnaissance visit by Deputy Premier Malenkov. On June,

1, Marshal Tito visited the Soviet Union and signed statements re-establishing relations between the Soviet and Yugoslav Communist Parties. This visit gave Khrushchev the opportunity to replace Molotov as Foreign Secretary by Shepilov.

From June 1956 the anti-Stalin wave in Poland and Hungary, and the Hungarian revolution itself, weakened Khrushchev's position. Molotov, Kaganovich and the other Stalinists in the apparatus could rightly say that Khrushchev's anti-Stalin speech and the general policy of relaxation made these developments possible, or even caused many of them.

Khrushchev's position was most insecure at this time. In the Presidium of eleven members the Stalinist faction of Molotov, Kaganovich and Voroshilov was against him. The technocrats and "planners"—Malenkov, Saburov and Pervukhin—were against his improvisations and constant reorganisations. Bulganin and Mikoyan were critical of many aspects of his policies. Khrushchev could not be sure of eight out of eleven votes in the Presidium. The Hungarian revolution had caused a crisis in the Communist world. And crises were often used in the Kremlin power-struggles to get rid of rivals. There were indications that the Presidium was again backing Malenkov. There was a plan that at the February 1957 Central Committee Plenum, the seventy-five-year-old Voroshilov would retire as Chairman of the Supreme Soviet Presidium, to be replaced by Premier Bulganin, while the latter would be succeeded by Khrushchev. *The new First Secretary-designate was Malenkov.* In January 1957 Malenkov accompanied Khrushchev to Hungary, and in the government press there were attempts to feature Malenkov again.

It was at this time that Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Party leaders made their first major bid for ideological leadership of the Communist world. Stalin's heirs could not offer a consistent Marxist-Leninist interpretation of the events that had occurred since Stalin's death and at their Twentieth Party Congress they had demolished a great deal of Communist theory. They left their Party without a creed, without a history and without *a current international Party line*. The Chinese leaders stepped into the breach.

The Peking *People's Daily* of December 29, 1956, published the Chinese Politbureau's and Mao Tse-tung's "theses" on the

fundamental contradictions inherent in the imperialist system and the “non-fundamental contradictions” occurring within a Communist Party, between Communist Parties, between Communist States and *between the peoples and the government of a Communist State*. The theses asserted that although these latter contradictions are non-fundamental, nevertheless they must be resolved to save the Communist bloc because “the imperialists are bent on destroying us”.

The article went on to state that there had been errors on both sides in the relations between the USSR and the European “People’s Democracies”. The USSR had been guilty of chauvinism and the satellites of excessive nationalism. But Soviet intervention in Hungary was justified. The USSR had taken commendable steps to eliminate past mistakes and restore solidarity in the Communist movement. It remained the “centre and core” of the movement. *Pravda* of December 30 published the verbatim text of the Chinese article, although it contained the implicit statement that the Soviet Union was *not the sole leader*, but only the centre and core of world Communism.

The Chinese Premier, Chou En-lai, was on an Asian tour when Mao Tse-tung suddenly decided that the unity of the Communist bloc must be saved through prompt intervention. Chou En-lai was recalled post-haste from India on January 2, 1957, to consult with Mao, then he flew to Moscow, and later to Warsaw and Budapest. Returning to Moscow on January 17, he attacked the Hungarian revolution and all those who threaten the unity of the Communist bloc. He invited Marshal Voroshilov for a state visit to Peking, thereby preventing his planned resignation, and presumably making the squabbling members of the Presidium understand that this was not the time to effect important changes in Soviet leadership. At the January 18 reception for Chou En-lai, Khrushchev praised the *original creative approach* of the Chinese leaders to Marxism-Leninism and declared himself a staunch Stalinist:

The enemies of Communism have deliberately invented the word “Stalinist”, and are trying to make it offensive. For us, Marxist-Leninists . . . Stalin is inseparable from Marxism-Leninism. That is why everyone among us . . . wishes to be as faithful to the cause of Marxism-Leninism . . . as Stalin was faithful.

The unity of the Communist bloc was really in danger during this period. But Mao's prompt ideological intervention and Chou En-lai's European round trip seem to have been timed to prevent a major reshuffle in Soviet leadership. The obviously improvised intervention (Chou's recall from his Asian trip) saved Khrushchev's position. We have no published material to prove that this happened at Khrushchev's request. It is however a fact that *the first case in history of Chinese intervention in European affairs*, coincided with this dangerous stage in the Kremlin power-struggle.

The result of the Chinese intervention and the partial return to Stalinism was welcomed by the Party apparatchiki. The line was toughened. Soviet-Yugoslav relations became tense again. In Hungary mass arrests and executions were stepped up. University students all over the USSR and the satellites were informed that the Party and the State would refuse them university education if they turned against the Party by revisionist, pro-Hungarian and other dangerous activities.

At the February 1957 meeting of the Soviet Central Committee Khrushchev proposed a large-scale decentralisation of industrial management. The Central Committee, instead of endorsing the proposal, referred it back to the Presidium. On March 30 these proposals were published for public discussion not as the "theses of the Central Committee" but as "the theses of Comrade Khrushchev's report" to the next session of the Supreme Soviet in May.

Soviet economy at this time was suffering from the over-optimistic, verbocratic policies forced through by Khrushchev. As a matter of fact, the Hungarian revolution was not only a blow to Khrushchev, but also a great advantage. His over-optimism, his habit of disregarding expert advice if a scheme appeared to have good propaganda possibilities, had a harmful effect on Soviet planning. Before the Hungarian revolution it was already very probable that the current plan would have to be dropped, which would have been a major defeat for Khrushchev. Now he and his apparatus could use the economic disruption caused by the Hungarian revolution, the need for the Soviet bloc to help devastated Hungary, as a pretext for dropping the plan. All this was of course known to the Central Committee. And although the majority of this body was

Khrushchevite, even these apparatchiki were unwilling to accept his industrial reorganisation scheme. This was a defeat for Khrushchev. He was powerful enough to get consent to offer his scheme for public discussion. This however was a doubtful victory for him, because no dictator likes to encourage the growth of independent public opinion and free public discussion. He realised that this discussion could not be censored in his interests, because the government press and a section of the economic and industrial journals were not directly controlled by him.

As occurs so often in Communist régimes, the problem had an overt and a covert meaning. Apparently the problem was one of economic organisation and administration. In reality, the main aim of these proposals was to weaken Khrushchev's opponents. By decentralisation and by dispersing management from Moscow, Khrushchev wanted to destroy or at least weaken the influence of the technocratic and economic élite. This élite, mainly working through the government, was against too much interference by the non-expert apparatchiki in their work. Through these moves Khrushchev also wanted to weaken the government leaders and the power of the central (All-Union) government. As Party control is exercised everywhere, on all levels, the weakening of the central government increases the power of the central Party-apparatus which goes on directing local Party control of industry.

At the same time the Party press and various Party publications were again featuring Khrushchev as the “head of collective leadership”. In Party publications Khrushchev's secretariat was described as having powers equal to those of the Party Presidium!

Through these moves and plans Khrushchev again united the various factions in the Politbureau. Among the Presidium members were two recently demoted planning chiefs: Saburov and Pervukhin. With Malenkov and Mikoyan they were against Khrushchev's industrial and agricultural policies, and against his bid for Stalin's mantle.

In the spring of 1957 there was already an agreement between this group and the Molotov-Kaganovich faction to demote Khrushchev entirely. Malenkov was to be Premier and Molotov First Secretary.

The famous "anti-Party plot" was nothing but a "constitutional" majority decision of the Presidium to demote Khrushchev. This happened in June 1957. But it was only at the Twenty-first Party Congress in January 1959, that most of this "plot" was cleared up. It turned out then that at least Bulganin, Malenkov, Molotov, Kaganovich, Saburov, Pervukhin and Shepilov voted against Khrushchev. "At least", because there are signs that Voroshilov and Mikoyan also turned against him. That Bulganin was an "anti-Party" plotter was not announced by Khrushchev until more than a year after the event. It is still possible that more plotters will be "unmasked".

The majority of the Presidium had a very wide backing for its decision, as is shown by the nation-wide discussion of Khrushchev's "theses" for the reorganisation of industry. Many of the contributions in the Press contained serious criticism of many aspects of the reorganisation scheme. In the Supreme Soviet, when the theses were discussed, *not a single factory director spoke*. None was found to endorse it and critics were not allowed to speak. It is even more significant that with the sole exception of Kirichenko, no member of the Presidium took part in this discussion. They did not pronounce on Khrushchev's theses in any shape or form. As there was a lot of criticism of Khrushchev's agricultural schemes and other aspects of his policy, *even the Soviet press demonstrated that his policies were not popular*, and that the majority of experts had a poor opinion of them.

According to Party practice and constitution the Presidium has a right to criticise the First Secretary's policies, or even vote against them. There are many precedents for the Presidium (Politbureau) effecting major changes in Party leadership. So the majority of the Presidium committed the crime of not agreeing with Khrushchev and of constitutionally demoting him.

Khrushchev's answer was to order to Moscow the 255 members of the Central Committee and ask them to reverse the Presidium decision. It was again demonstrated that in the Soviet system the Party apparatus is the source of all power. The apparatus was packed by Khrushchev's men. He had an absolute majority. Yet it was not easy for him to force through

a decision against the majority of the Presidium. This is indicated by the fact that the plenary session of the Central Committee lasted for seven days from June 22 to 29. The majority of the very same Central Committee which refused to endorse Khrushchev's industrial scheme in February for *objective reasons*, saved him now for *subjective reasons*. It was one thing to stop Khrushchev from harmful policies, but an entirely different thing to oust him from leadership and oust with him the entire hierarchy of his supporters. The Khrushchev-men, when they had to choose between losing their positions by voting according to their already declared convictions, or saving their own position by turning against their own February decisions, decided for the second course. Their position was secure; only Soviet economy was to suffer. But this was not an easy decision to take. Many Khrushchevites wavered and the opposition was very vocal. Later Khrushchev ousted not only members of his opposition, but also many Khrushchevites who were not loyal enough to him during this debate. They were branded “anti-Party”, which of course meant “anti-Khrushchev”.

From subsequent disclosures and from the minutes of later Central Committee Plenums and those of the Twenty-first Party Congress, we know that the debates were stormy. The Presidium members argued their case in detail. They gave objective reasons for their opposition to Khrushchev's policies: the economy of the USSR was in sore need of consolidation. Reorganisations in agriculture and industry would cause an extended period of “unbalance”. Instead of a smoothly working machinery of national economy there would be a further period of disorder. The virgin-lands scheme in agriculture could be judged only after a period of ten years or more. Past experience showed that these “virgin lands” could produce harvests only for a few years; then they have to “rest” again for years. The USSR needed intensive agriculture. The virgin lands campaign required an enormous amount of agricultural machinery which would put a strain on industry. The question of collective leadership was again raised. The Presidium members warned against “enormous power being concentrated” in the hands of the First Secretary. Lenin's testament and the secret anti-Stalin speech were quoted.

Some of the 255 participants must have talked, because there were long reports about the debate in the non-Communist press. There are only indirect indications in Soviet sources that Khrushchev accused Molotov, Malenkov and Kaganovich with complicity in Stalin's purges. According to oral reports which circulated widely, Khrushchev told them

"Your hands are stained with the blood of our Party Leaders and of innumerable innocent Bolsheviks."

"So are yours!" shouted back Molotov and Kaganovich. Khrushchev was supposed to reply:

"Yes, so are mine. But during the purges I was merely carrying out your orders. I wasn't in the Politbureau then, I am not responsible for its decisions. But you are!"

Then someone quoted back at Khrushchev his own anti-Stalin speech according to which Stalin did not inform the Politbureau about planned arrests and executions. These oral reports are partly substantiated by subsequent events.

A few days after this meeting, Khrushchev, speaking in Leningrad on July 6, called Malenkov "one of the chief organisers" of the Leningrad blood-purge. Another "chief organiser", former MVD Minister Abakumov had already been shot for this crime. *Pravda* of August 28 quoted Khrushchev as saying about the Leningrad affair:

Great blame is attached in this matter to Comrade Malenkov who fell under the complete influence of Beriya, was his shadow, and was a tool in Beriya's hands. Occupying a high position in the Party and the State, Comrade Malenkov not only failed to restrain J. V. Stalin but very adroitly exploited Stalin's weaknesses and habits in the last years of his life. In many cases he egged him on to actions which merit severe condemnation.

As Stalin's main weakness was the execution of innocent people and as Beriya was the current arch-criminal of Soviet demonology, this was virtually a capital charge.

The July 4 Central Committee communiqué reported that Molotov, Malenkov and Kaganovich were expelled from the Presidium and Shepilov was dismissed from the secretariat for their "anti-Party" machinations. Molotov was sent as Soviet ambassador to Outer Mongolia, Malenkov became director of the Ust-Kamenogorsk hydro-electric station and Kaganovich

was sent to Sverdlovsk to manage a cement factory there.

The new Presidium packed with Khrushchev-men, was enlarged from eleven to fifteen full members and from seven to nine candidate members. The Minister of Defence, Marshal Zhukov, the very popular army leader, became a full member of the Presidium. During the Central Committee meeting Zhukov gave his backing to the majority, presumably because the army was against an extended power-struggle. Zhukov supported Khrushchev personally by repeating the false charges against the “anti-Party” group.

By becoming a member of the supreme Party leadership, Zhukov added enormously to the prestige of the army. Moreover as the army chief was also one of the official Party leaders, the army could hope that in future Party direction of the army would be exercised by such a military expert as Zhukov, and not by non-expert apparatchiki. Khrushchev took Zhukov into the Presidium to use his backing *temporarily* against the opposition. The technocratic and economic élite were appalled by the false charges against Malenkov, and many apparatchiki disliked the treatment of such old associates of Lenin and Stalin as Molotov and Kaganovich. It was very important for Khrushchev to show that the army backed their ousting, just as it backed that of Beriya. But he realised that this was not a satisfactory situation. A further intervention by Zhukov and the army might be against himself. So Zhukov had to be ousted.

Zhukov had just returned from an official visit to Belgrade when on October 26 he was “released” from his post of Minister of Defence. On November 2 his expulsion from the Presidium and from the Central Committee was announced.

Barely three months earlier he had been elevated to the highest Party rank. Now Khrushchev’s Central Committee “discovered” that he was partly responsible for Stalin’s failure to take into account the warnings of a Nazi attack in 1941. (Contrary to the statements of the secret speech.) He was accused of strategical and tactical errors during the war, with interfering with Party control over the army and the navy; and with inclining towards adventurism in foreign policy. (Soviet-Turkish tension was relaxed after his demotion. But there are signs which indicate that one of the reasons for this tension was to get rid of Zhukov.) Marshal Konev accused

Zhukov of the "cult of his own personality", a charge somewhat singular at a time when Khrushchev's personality cult was growing by leaps and bounds.

Significantly, Zhukov's successor as Minister of Defence, Marshal Malinovsky, *was not* admitted to the Presidium. Khrushchev went on to build up his empire in the apparatus, to purge Central Committee members who did not support him and to make the government, the army and the police, "transmission belts" for the decisions of his own Party secretariat.

The Sputnik success, bumper harvests, industrial achievements and a growing international prestige, secured his position temporarily. But as his subsequent actions prove, *he did not feel safe*. He still wanted to annihilate the anti-Party opposition, fearing that any international or internal reverse would strengthen their ranks. Bumper harvests could be followed by droughts; the intellectuals could stage new demonstrations, Soviet prestige in the international field might suffer blows. To face such possibilities, he had to strengthen his position far more.

In the spring of 1958 when the campaign for a summit meeting was on, Khrushchev had to convince the Central Committee that the real head of the Soviet Union must be the Premier, since otherwise the figurehead, Bulganin, would have to negotiate with President Eisenhower and the other Western leaders. A few days before the end of the March session of the Supreme Soviet Mikoyan told Western reporters at an Embassy reception in Moscow that they should not expect any "Government changes" at this session. But at the March 27 session Voroshilov, as Chairman of the Supreme Soviet Presidium, proposed that "dear Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev" should be elected Prime Minister in succession to Bulganin; and in view of his "exceptionally fruitful work" as First Secretary, he should also continue in that position. Voroshilov spoke at length about Khrushchev's "outstanding personality", "creative endeavour", "inexhaustible energy", "untiring labour".

"We are proud," he said, "that at *the head of our Party* is a man who is so boldly and insistently *leading us* to Communism."

Khrushchev sat there with bowed head between Mikoyan and Voroshilov (with Bulganin behind him) as the Supreme

Soviet voted him into Premiership. The voting was unanimous, the faces of Mikoyan, Voroshilov, Bulganin and others, serious, stern almost morose. (K. was not looking; see plate, facing p. 144.) With his short, very fat neck and large paunch, it was difficult for Khrushchev to bow his head in humble modesty. But this was also psychologically difficult for him. The expression on his face was anything but modest or moved. It was grim and determined. He said afterwards: “By your decision, you have just expressed great confidence in me and have done me a great honour. I shall do everything to justify your confidence and shall not spare health, strength or life to serve you.”

Having now also formally the direction of the government in his hands, Khrushchev went on with his detailed manoeuvres to strengthen his position in every respect and on all levels of Soviet life. His opponents however were not effectively purged. The ousted leaders had very large but temporarily silenced followings in the Party, among government employees, in the army, the technocratic and economic élite. The “thaw” of the writers still went on. All through 1957 and 1958 many Soviet writers and intellectuals could not be made to recant, and went on with their attacks on dogmatism, Party direction and isolation from the West.

This opposition had to be effectively silenced through the total annihilation of the leaders. Imre Nagy, Paul Maleter and the other leaders of the Hungarian revolution were executed not because of internal developments in Hungary but in order to frighten all revisionists. In November 1958 Khrushchev “revealed” to the Central Committee that Bulganin was also a member of the anti-Party group.

The Party Central Committee held another meeting from December 15 to 19 and there was a Supreme Soviet session from December 22 to 25. Both were preparations for the Twenty-first Party Congress in January 1959, at which Khrushchev intended to liquidate the opposition. Attacks on the “anti-Party” group were mounting in the press. In his address to the Central Committee Khrushchev delivered a comprehensive attack on the five anti-Party offenders and their unnamed associates. Now they were charged with obstructing industrial and agricultural policy, relaxation in internal and external affairs and with complicity in Stalin’s purges.

Bulganin in an abject "self-confession", reported by *Pravda* in full on December 19, described the activities of the anti-Party group (which he had joined only at the very end) as "criminal". Bulganin in addition to the general charges against all members of the group, singled out Malenkov particularly, describing him as an "intriguer capable of all kinds of villainy and improbity". Then speaker after speaker got up to denounce the "criminal, treacherous activities" of such "vile persons" as Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich, Bulganin and Shepilov.

The 540-page report of this meeting shows that in June 1957 the majority of the Presidium wanted to oust Khrushchev because all of the important ministries and planning bodies of the USSR were against the steps he was taking in agriculture and industry. The ousting of Pervukhin and Saburov proved that Khrushchev was faced with a clear majority. Yurkin, a Deputy Minister of Agriculture, speaking of the June 1957 Central Committee meeting said:

We saw Nikita Sergeyevich struggling desperately against Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich, Shepilov. Bulganin, however, was silent as a rule. He can say that silence is a sign of agreement. But it was shown last June with whom he was agreeing when his office of the Premier became a nest of conspiracy.

Ignatiev, the former Minister of Security, deposed after Stalin's death for complicity in the last purges, and saved by Khrushchev, now turned against Bulganin and stated that Bulganin's admission of guilt was incomplete. Another Khrushchev-man, Kolyushinsky, called Bulganin a liar for saying that he joined the opposition at the very end (when its majority was obvious): "No, you were a member of this *vile, treacherous group*, and that is what you can call yourself."

The objections of the State Planning Committee to Khrushchev's policies were denounced as "tricks" to strengthen the opposition. The members of the opposition were called "vile traitors", enemies of the Leninist Party line. They were accused of obstructing the policy of relaxation, of trying to sabotage heavy industry and of consumer goods production. The accusations could of course all be disproved by Khrushchev's own previous statements, but by this time these had become "unfacts".

Many speakers belonging to Khrushchev's closest entourage were dissatisfied with Bulganin's self-confessions for not furnishing enough incriminating facts against his fellow conspirators. V. V. Masskevitch, the Minister of Agriculture, said:

If Bulganin has in fact repented and felt the truth, then he must disarm himself completely and tell honestly about his subversive work and about *the roots which have still remained*.

A. Y. Snehkus, the Lithuanian first secretary, denounced Bulganin for his close relations with Malenkov whom he tried to “protect in every way”.

A fuller “confession” by Bulganin was important since the rest of the conspirators had declined to make any sort of confession.

Another interesting feature revealed by the stenographic report of this meeting is Khrushchev's dictatorial behaviour. Although at each session there was a different chairman, Khrushchev not only managed all sessions but he frequently interrupted at least two out of every three speakers. Stalin was very fond of interrupting the speakers. Now it was Khrushchev who transformed some reports and speeches into conversations between the great chief and one of his underlings. No one dared to disagree with him, and these impromptu dialogues always ended with the interrupted enthusiastically agreeing with the interrupter. Khrushchev however interrupted only his trusted followers. He had not a word to say when firm members of the opposition spoke.

The Supreme Soviet session ratified the new changes in Soviet criminal law planned by Khrushchev's legal secretaries. The new code deprived the police of powers to sentence, imprison and deport citizens. Guilt by association, by “category”, by family responsibility was abolished. People were to be sentenced only by a properly constituted court on open trial. The powers of the Prosecutor-General (under Party-directions) were greatly increased. The death penalty however was retained for high treason, espionage, subversive and terrorist acts, premeditated murder and banditry. It was ominous that among the crimes labelled as high treason, the code retained *conspiracy for the purpose of seizing power*. Malenkov, Molotov and Co. had been for months accused of conspiracy and vile treacherous preparations to seize power.

For ordinary citizens the new criminal code was reassuring. The terrible purges of the *Yezhovchina* period could not be repeated under the new criminal code. Another reassuring step was General Serov's demotion as Chairman of the Committee of State Security (KGB). He was replaced by a Party apparatchik, the former Comsomol-leader, Alexander Shelepin. This was of course the final step in the process of subjugating the police to the Party. It was also in the general Khrushchev line of replacing experts in all key-positions with career Party managers. But an apparatchik as head of the KGB also made it easier for Khrushchev to start proceedings against the "anti-Party conspirators", according to the new criminal code. Without much fabrication all of them could be accused of complicity in some of Stalin's crimes. But of course so could Khrushchev and his faithful followers too.

After the Central Committee and Supreme Soviet meetings everybody was waiting for the ominous December 24 issue of *Pravda*, in which in previous years Beriya's and Abakumov's execution and other portentous decisions had been announced. On this occasion the newspaper reported the declaration of the Prosecutor-General of the USSR, General Rudenko, that Malenkov, Kaganovich, Molotov and Bulganin had been "guilty of crude arbitrariness and criminal violations of Socialist legality". This was a further sign that at the coming Twenty-first Party Congress Khrushchev intended to have these "criminals" expelled from the Party and their cases referred to the Prosecutor-General who was already convinced of their guilt.

Their expulsion was hinted at by Khrushchev at the Central Committee meeting when he confessed that it was difficult for him to call these people "comrades"—a title to which all Party members are entitled. And leading Communists can be expelled from the Party only for grave crimes. . . .

On the eve of the Twenty-first Congress at the end of January 1959, the official Party periodical *Party Life* published an article by the Leningrad secretary, Spiridonov. This apparatchik claimed that not only Malenkov, but certain other members of the anti-Party group were also implicated in the Leningrad affair, leading to the execution of innocent Communist leaders.

At the Twenty-first Party Congress however Khrushchev suffered a reverse. The principal accused, Malenkov, Molotov and Kaganovich, did not speak, refusing categorically to make any “self-confessions” in the manner of Bulganin. This tired old apparatchik was also silent. He could not be threatened or cajoled into making any further revelations about the “shameful activities of his group”.

In his opening speech Khrushchev briefly accused the opposition of having “resorted to the vilest methods . . . in an attempt to undermine Party unity”, obviously leaving further and detailed accusations to his supporters. Next day the Leningrad secretary, Spiridonov, opened the attack by demanding that the members of the conspiracy should be summoned “sternly and severely” to “answer before the Congress, the highest organ of the Party” . . . for their “treacherous activities”. This showed that previous summonses had not been stern and severe enough. Kirichenko, Khrushchev’s most trusted lieutenant, said that with every passing day “all the infamy of the splitting activities of these political intriguers and double-dealers becomes clearer”.

The planning expert Pervukhin made his confession on February 3: he had only felt and uttered doubts about the reorganisation of economic management. His dissatisfaction had led him to support the group in “attacks on Comrade Khrushchev” in the Presidium in June 1957. This was his “basic guilt before the Party”. As extenuating circumstance he stated that when the conspirators proposed to the Presidium to “change the leadership”, he had deserted them. He thanked the Central Committee for giving him a chance to “purge my guilt before the Party and be useful to it”. He was permitted to remain ambassador to East Germany. His confession, and Saburov’s unpublished admissions, only proved to the Congress that the Presidium thought Khrushchev’s policies dangerous for objective reason and wanted to depose him. The guilt of the conspirators was their disagreement with Khrushchev.

Most members of the Presidium did not follow the Khrushchevite line by attacking the oppositionists as criminals. Mikoyan in his speech stressed that “now there are no reprisals against our citizens for political reasons”. He treated

their case as closed. In the first sentence of his speech he affirmed that the "*sole purpose*" of the Congress was the discussion of the seven year plan. Suslov, the leader nearest to Molotov and Kaganovich, started his speech by asserting that since this was an extraordinary Congress the report delivered to it was *not a report of the Central Committee*.

Whatever happened behind the scenes, Khrushchev was again thwarted in his very obvious attempt to initiate purges against his opponents. The Congress disregarded his charges, disregarded the assertions of the Prosecutor-General, and the accusations piled up in the press, and did not expel the "vile conspirators" and "anti-Party criminals" from the Party. Some of them even kept their membership of the Central Committee. The Congress resolution simply endorsed the decisions "taken by the June 1957 plenum which unmasked and *routed ideologically* the anti-Party group".

The Congress however charged the Central Committee to examine appeals sent to the Congress concerning "the imposition of Party penalties and other personal questions". This gave Khrushchev a chance to find new incriminating facts against the opposition. Meanwhile, the USSR is the only country in the world which has two ambassadors who have been officially branded as "vile criminals"; and several members of the Soviet Communist Party have been publicly accused of high treason. . . .

In every other respect the Twenty-first Congress was a great personal victory for the First Secretary. Speaker after speaker paid tribute to his knowledge, wisdom, untiring energy. One speaker said that Khrushchev is "a powerful source of energy and inspiration" to the Soviet people *and the whole world*. Another stated that he is "the living embodiment of Leninist ideas on the building of Communism". Academician Kurchatov attributed the extraordinary developments of thermonuclear research in the USSR to his personal intervention. From the speeches at the Congress and the articles in the press after it, Khrushchev emerged as an all-round genius. He was described as giving a lead and wise guidance to all fields of science, all aspects of industry and agriculture. From historians to biologists and from philosophers to military experts—

everyone paid tribute to the expert guidance and outstanding contribution they received from Khrushchev.

Izvestia of February 28, 1959, had this to say about Khrushchev's report:

This report is a programmatic document for our Party, for the whole international working class and Communist movement. The depth of its analysis, the clarity and precision of its theoretical premises make this one of the greatest works of Marxism-Leninism. The report has pulled back the curtain from our future, and has shown what tomorrow will be like in our country and the whole Socialist world.

XIV

WHO IS TO LEAD THE COMMUNIST WORLD ?

Khrushchev and Mao Tse-tung

THE power-struggle behind the scenes of the Twenty-first Party Congress was the least significant aspect of this event. By accepting Khrushchev's theses on the building of Communism, by sponsoring the new seven year plan, by wholeheartedly agreeing with Khrushchev's ideological attack on the Chinese deviation—the Congress showed what are the real plans of the Khrushchev-leadership for the years to come. It also demonstrated the objective reasons for the Soviet peace policy.

The Khrushchev theses and the theoretical basis of the new seven year plan were determined by many factors, one of the main factors being the Chinese-Soviet ideological rivalry.

By shattering the edifice of Stalinist dogmas, the Twentieth Congress had made it necessary to produce a new comprehensive Party programme for the second half of the century. Khrushchev failed to work out such a programme swiftly enough, thereby exposing his "ideological flank". His rivals, therefore, have attacked from this direction, exposing Khrushchev's inconsistencies and failures in industrial and agricultural reorganisation. Malenkov, Kaganovich and Molotov in Russia, Mao Tse-tung, Tito and, in a lesser way, Gomulka elsewhere, came forward to fill the ideological void.

The question was: "Who will be the Lenin of today, the infallible interpreter of Marxism and ideological leader of the Communist world?"

As the struggle developed the front line of battle came to be between the USSR and China. Who would make "the decisive leap forward"? Who would work out the final blueprint for Communist development and for the economic salvation of underdeveloped countries? Who would attain first "the withering away of the State": the USSR or China?

According to Marxist theory, human society develops from Capitalism through Socialism to Communism. "Communism" in this sense is the highest possible phase of historical development, the realisation of the Communist millennium. Officially, until summer 1958, the entire Sino-Soviet orbit was still in the *Socialist phase*. Then in August Mao Tse-tung astonished the Red part of the globe with the announcement that China was making "a tremendous leap forward", and was on the verge of attaining Communism. His theoretical journal, *Red Flag*, proclaimed on August 30 that:

With the system of communes the differences between town and countryside, and between mental and physical work . . . will gradually disappear. . . . The function of the State will be only to deal with outside aggression, *it will not operate internally*. . . . Our country will enter a new era: from the socialist era based on the principle of "to each according to his work", to the Communist era based on the principle "to each according to his needs".

While in China millions of posters welcomed the transition to the Communist era, the Soviet October anniversary slogans (published on November 7, 1958) flatly denied the Chinese claims. Slogan No. 4 read: "Long live the 21st Congress of the Soviet CP—the congress of the builders of Communism!" Slogan No. 13 was: "Brotherly greetings to the great Chinese people building Socialism."

In the same period the Yugoslavs were savagely attacked for their far slighter ideological deviations, but the Soviet leaders and their press maintained an ominous silence over the Chinese bid for leadership.

Khrushchev's first victory came with the December 10, 1958, resolution of the Chinese Communist Party, admitting "that any attempt, when conditions are not mature, to enter Communism by over-reaching ourselves—is undoubtedly a utopian concept *that cannot possibly succeed*". Instead of the big leap, Mao had to make a step or two backwards. Mao resigned as Chairman of the Republic, who is *ex officio* chairman of the Defence Council, and retained "only" his Party Chairmanship and with that the use of the Party apparatus.

But during this struggle, the anti-Khrushchev factions in Moscow were supporting Mao, and there were many symptoms

of an imperialistic struggle between China and the USSR for leadership in Asia and the underdeveloped world. The replacement of national minorities living on the Sino-Soviet frontier by two million Chinese; the execution of a large number of pro-Chinese Party and government officials in Outer Mongolia;* and the pro-Mao declarations of the North Korean and Bulgarian Party leadership were only some of the symptoms.

After his December 10 victory over Mao Tse-tung, Khrushchev announced some of his "theses" for the Twenty-first Congress. He proclaimed that the next seven years would show "a great leap forward in the development towards Communism", and in a further eight years the USSR would surpass the United States in *per capita* production, thereby "creating the material base of Communism". During the same period the State would start to "wither away" in the USSR.

Khrushchev's theoretical journal, the *Kommunist* (No. 12, 1958), stated that many functions of the State were to be taken over by "social organisations" like the trade unions, but mainly by the Party, which will not "wither away". It seems that Khrushchev will try to concentrate even more power in his hands by gradually liquidating various State organs and governing directly through his Party apparatus.

After these preludes, Communist apparatchiki the world over waited the outcome of the Twenty-first Congress with the greatest interest.

There were many reasons for calling this Congress "extraordinary" and limiting it to decisions concerning the seven year plan. The anti-purge elements had an obvious reason for this limitation. But so had Khrushchev. The Twentieth Congress had established a commission to draft a new Party programme and present it to the Twenty-first Congress. Kuusinen, a member of the commission, revealed however that the draft programme would not be presented until the Twenty-second Congress to be held in 1962. Khrushchev did not want to come out with a new Party programme before he

* It is interesting to recall that the Sino-Soviet agreement of May 31, 1924, recognised Outer Mongolia as an integral part of the (then non-Communist) Chinese Republic and acknowledged Chinese sovereignty over it.

had absolutely secured his position. Any final statements on the programme might limit his possibilities of manoeuvre in his struggle against the opposition forces, in the USSR and the Communist world.

His theses and report on the seven year plan described its main task as follows:

1. the creation of the material and technical basis of Communism;
2. the consolidation of the economic and defence power of the USSR;
3. the full satisfaction of the material and cultural needs of the Soviet people;
4. ensuring the victory of the USSR in the peaceful economic competition with the capitalist countries of the West.

The seven year plan was the most important campaign in the Kremlin struggle for world supremacy.

Khrushchev claimed that United States economic power would be equalled by the USSR in 1970, five years after the end of the seven year plan:

If we calculate per head of the population, another five years will probably be needed after the fulfilment of the seven year plan to catch up with and outstrip the United States industrial output. Thus by that time, or perhaps even sooner, the Soviet Union will advance to the first place in the world both in the absolute volume of production and in production per head of the population. This will be a historical world victory for Socialism in peaceful competition with capitalism in the international area. (Khrushchev's speech, January 27, 1959.)

Khrushchev pointed out that in this peaceful competition with the United States, they have to rely on political as well as economic factors. Among these Khrushchev attributed a great deal of importance to the "scientific laws" about the "inevitable crises" and inherent contradictions of the capitalist-imperialist system. These "laws" promulgated by Marx and Engels based on mid-nineteenth-century experience and those derived by Lenin from the world situation in the first two decades of the twentieth century, are according to Khrushchev still valid in the second part of the twentieth century. "Capitalism," he emphasised, *"is incapable of freeing itself from the death grip of its own contradictions."*

Two other important political factors are, according to him:

1. The plan "will raise to an unparalleled degree the force of attraction of Communist ideas", especially in the less developed countries of the world.

2. The economic progress of the entire Socialist camp, including China, and the consolidation of its strength and unity under Soviet leadership.

The Congress heard also something of the difficulties in the way towards victory. Aristov, one of the most powerful leaders under Khrushchev, referred to the heavy demands that are to be made on the Soviet engineering industry during the next seven years. He said that some engineering works were already overloaded and still had to deal with aid commitments to China, India and other countries. It should be noted in this context, that the planning expert, Saburov, confessed that the anti-Party group had opposed the policy of giving too much aid to underdeveloped countries.

Khrushchev spoke about ideological dangers:

Some workers underestimate the harm of bourgeois influences upon Soviet youth, thinking that the bourgeoisie is far from us, and that our youth is beyond its reach. But this is an error. We cannot ignore the possibility of bourgeois influence and are obliged to wage a struggle against it, against the penetration of alien views and morals among Soviet people and particularly among the young.

Speaking about the transition to Communism ("to each according to his needs") Khrushchev emphasised that this can be attained only when there is "an abundance of goods". But the satisfaction of the material and cultural needs of the people does not mean the satisfaction of "whims" or "luxuries" as in the capitalist countries.

His theses on the transition to Communism contained his very severe attack on Mao and the Chinese leadership. He did not name them, but Mao is unmistakably one of the "comrades" whom he accused of inflicting damage on the building of Communism and of having distorted and compromised the Communist cause.

In China, in 1958, millions of posters proclaimed in huge red characters those Maoist "golden sayings", which according to

Khrushchev, discredit Communism. The students of Peking universities alone made half a million of these posters, and the slogans were blared by loudspeakers incessantly in city squares and village centres and on trains. With this technique of hypnopedagogics everyone in China was made to learn by heart the results of Mao's "great leap forward" in Marxist theory.

Whether distribution of the necessities of life according to one's labour is a "bourgeois legal concept" or not is not a very exciting question for the West. But for those Chinese whose life in 1958 was changed into an Orwellian inferno because Mao answered this question in the affirmative, it was startling to learn from Khrushchev that this was a theoretical mistake.

For the millions who had to fight for the right to eight hours' sleep; for old people doing forced labour in the barracks for the aged called "Happy Homes"; for the families of those executed because of their reluctance to make their personal "leap forward"; for the 140,000 students and professors sent to build dams, as "remedial manual labour", because they doubted Mao's policies—for all these it was a great shock to learn from the infallible Khrushchev that their sufferings were in vain. Instead of bringing nearer the Communist millennium, they were damaging the building of Communism.

The great "leap forward" was based on Mao's conviction that China should proclaim Communism before becoming a major industrial power. "The liberated, united and organised 600 million people constitute the greatest creative force in the world, and in comparison the United States and Britain are but dwarfs," said the Peking *People's Daily*. But if the muscle-power of millions makes up for the lack of highly developed modern industry, *is not Russia, too, a dwarf by comparison?*

Apart from remarks about muscle-power being "the clumsiest and most expensive form of energy", Khrushchev did not deal with this question until, in his report to the Twenty-first Congress, he criticised at length those who thought—as do the Chinese and North Korean Communist bosses—that industrialisation could proceed *concurrently* with the advance of Communism.

"Some comrades", he commented, "say that the principles of Communism should be introduced more quickly. But to switch over to distribution according to needs when the

economic conditions for this have not yet been created . . . means to inflict damage on the building of Communism."

When in 1958 Mao initiated the commune movement, a fierce campaign was immediately launched against the "bourgeois theory of material incentives". Official Party slogans during October and November told the Chinese to "Work hard for Communism and not for extra wages! Don't allow banknotes to take command! In the great leap forward voluntary labour is needed regardless of working hours and remuneration!"

Millions of people had less and less to eat because Mao turned against incentives. Finally Peking Radio explained on November 17 and 18 that the principle of "To each according to his work" was a "bourgeois legal concept". Khrushchev has now attacked this theory in no uncertain terms:

Lenin declared most emphatically that without the material interest in the result of their labour it was impossible to raise productive power. . . . Some scientific workers say that distribution according to work means the application of a bourgeois law in a Socialist society. . . . This is confused thinking because levelling would lead to unjust distribution. . . . Levelling would mean not a transition to Communism but the discrediting of it.

Khrushchev explained in great detail that the transition to full Communism would be attained only in the fairly distant future, for even in 1970, when the USSR caught up with the United States, it will still have reached only "a half-way stage" on its road to Communism.

According to Soviet theory the European Socialist countries led by the USSR and united into a single economic council, "comprise a particular economic zone and will be the first to enter Communism". The "Asiatic Socialist countries . . . comprise another regional zone and will also enter Communism all together". (See the article by the leading theoretician T. A. Stepanyan in the October 1958 issue of *Voprosi Filozofii*.)

Presumably as a concession to the Chinese, Khrushchev announced at the Twenty-first Soviet Party Congress that the countries of the Socialist bloc would reach Communism "more or less simultaneously". This is somewhat less offensive to Asian Communists than Stepanyan's formulation, but its real significance is obscure and has not been elucidated by

Soviet theoreticians. The omission is scarcely surprising, since if Khrushchev's statement means anything at all, it must imply the provision of economic aid to China on a scale so huge as to depress living standards in the Soviet Union for years to come. So the real Soviet attitude was expressed by Stepanyan.

Mao's China is then in the second-rank Asiatic "regional zone", and should hence refrain from attempts to serve as a model to all underdeveloped countries of the world. Khrushchev's analysis has been proved by the 1959 developments in China. Mao's Central Committee admitted officially that the published results of the 1958 "great leap forward" were most extraordinarily exaggerated; that of three million tons of home-made steel not a kilo could be used. The Chinese plan figures had to be scaled down and many industrial projects well under way had to be abandoned. A great leap had to be made backward. The "loss of face" for the Chinese Party Leadership was the bitterest experience of all the decades of Chinese Party history.

Nevertheless the Chinese Communist leaders have continued to press their claim to be a model for all the underdeveloped countries of the world and to attack those who (like Khrushchev) criticise the communes as utopian. The Chinese CP points out that certain "vital features" of Chinese experience may reappear in other countries as well, and urges the peoples of the underdeveloped countries to do what the Chinese have done. (Liu Shao-Chi, *Problems of Peace and Socialism*, No. 10, October 1959.)

An analysis of Chinese-Soviet relations would require a bulky volume. Government relations and inter-Party relations in this case are complex enough. But to trace step by step how various stages of the Kremlin power-struggle effected or were influenced by the Peking struggle for power; how various miscalculations of the Chinese leadership reacted on Soviet developments; how and why the two Party leaderships intrigued with the various factions in each other's camps, would require first a detailed description of the basic differences between Chinese and Soviet Communism.

Soviet policy—in the words of Sir Winston Churchill—is "a mystery wrapped in an enigma". But it is an easily explicable phenomenon compared to Chinese Communist policies.

In this chronicle only some basic problems of Soviet-Chinese relations can be mentioned.

1. Communist rule was established in China only at the end of 1949. In many respects China is in transition from the "War Communism" stage of the Soviets to the period of the great Stalinist purges. Mass-terror in China was and is conducted on an even larger scale than in the USSR of the Stalin era. Red China is therefore in a "left-deviationist stage" compared to the USSR.

2. The USSR in 1917 was on a far higher industrial, economic and cultural level than China is at present. China has still not caught up with the USSR of 1917. China is an under-developed country, while the USSR is one of the leading industrial powers.

3. Because of the great famines, Stalinist mass-terror, deportation of entire peoples and the ravages of the second world war, the USSR is not in step with the tremendous population increase in the world. In 1959 there are still only ninety-five million men as opposed to 114 million women in the USSR, an indication that the population increase there will be well below the world-average during the next decade. In China the "demographic explosion" is the greatest in the world. If present trends hold out, there will be a thousand million Chinese in 1980 and two thousand millions by the end of the century. With such a gigantic population increase next door, the comparatively empty territories of the Asiatic parts of the USSR are likely to cause anxieties. China can afford gigantic sacrifices in terms of human beings, the USSR not.

4. The USSR is a leading member in the United Nations Organisation instead of boycotting it out of solidarity with Red China. In this sense, but of course only in this sense, the USSR belongs to a different camp.

5. Red China not being a fully acknowledged world-power, can play a significant role only in the Communist world and in the so-called non-committed or neutral world. But in both worlds it is outranked by the USSR. The Chinese Communist leaders have had to admit that the USSR leads the Communist world.

6. Mao Tse-tung and his associates have made at least an attempt to evolve a comprehensive Communist programme for

the second part of the twentieth century. The Soviet leaders stopped them in this, but did not offer a programme of their own. As a Communist theoretician Mao still has reason to feel superior to Khrushchev.

The events of 1959, the Tibetan revolt, the frontier clashes with India, Chinese reactions to Khrushchev's American visit and to his peace policy, Khrushchev's refusal unequivocally to take China's side in the Sino-Indian frontier dispute—are all signs and symptoms of divergencies. In this chronicle the Sino-Soviet problems had to be hinted at to round out the picture of Khrushchev's position. In addition to the struggle against his opposition, to all the internal problems of the USSR and the European satellites, to Soviet policies towards the "capitalist bloc" and those of the neutrals—Khrushchev has to have up-to-date information about Chinese developments and about the state of the power-struggle within the Peking leadership.

Khrushchev and Mao are of course only representatives and symbols of the Moscow and Peking Communist leadership. In these systems in which the apparatus is supreme, personal qualities have comparatively small influence on developments. The position of dictators is never secure, and they have to give way at times to the "dictatorship of reality". Population increases; the second industrial revolution of nuclear physics, electronics and full automation; the tendency towards a "welfare globe"; the growing tension between fully developed and underdeveloped countries—all belong to reality, the dictates of which cannot be disregarded.

Ideologically Khrushchev's USSR and Mao's China belong in the same camp and it is in their interest to preserve the appearance of monolithic unity. In most other respects these two empires belong to different, and in certain cases, opposing camps. If the USSR does not want to abandon its aim of catching up with the United States by 1970, she cannot give effective help freely to underdeveloped China. But the nearer she gets in industrialisation and standard of life to the United States, the more enormous the difference will be in real attainment and position between the USSR and China.

Apart from these general reasons, there are many internal Party reasons why Mao and the present Chinese Party leadership might find it advisable to back Khrushchev's Stalinist

left-wing opposition in the USSR. And again, there might be other developments in which Mao or his successor would be willing to back the Malenkovite-technocrat faction.

When Mao Tse-tung resigned as President of the Republic, it was announced that he would give more time to basic work in the field of Marxist-Leninist theory. This indicates that he has not given up his bid for ideological leadership. Khrushchev meanwhile received the following message from the Soviet Party Presidium on April 17, 1959, on the occasion of his 65th birthday:

Our dear Nikita Sergeyevich, on your 65th birthday we warmly and heartily greet you—our elder comrade and friend, true disciple of Lenin, an outstanding leader. . . .

You dedicate all your seething energy, *wealth of political experience, wisdom, and daring initiative to the building of Communism in our country*, the consolidation of the might of the Soviet State, the strengthening of the positions of the socialist camp and *the entire international Communist and labour movement*.

. . . In all your activity we see a model for ourselves of an approach to the solution of large and small problems from positions of the Party and the State, a model of devoted service to the historic cause of the working class, an example of inseparable ties with the people, unshakeable allegiance to the principles of Marxism-Leninism. In your reports and speeches you display *models of creative enrichment of the theory of Marxism-Leninism*.

All these remarkable qualities have earned you the well deserved love and respect of the Party and the people. We strongly embrace you, our dear Nikita Sergeyevich, and wholeheartedly wish you good health, many and many years of life and fruitful activity for the sake of the Soviet people, and for the sake of Communism.

THE APPARATUS AND THE MAN

1. THE CHARACTER AND REAL AIMS OF THE APPARATUS IN 1959

IN the Communist system, as it is practised today, the Party apparatus still reigns supreme. In *times of peace*—but only in times of peace—the dictator exercises total control through “his” apparatus. How far any Party apparatus “belongs” to the dictator of the moment, what is the relationship between the dictator and the apparatus—has to be examined later.

One of the crucial problems of the world at the end of the nineteen fifties is whether Khrushchev and his apparatus really and sincerely want peace for any considerable period? Examining changes up to the end of 1959 and the general trends since Stalin’s death the answer is: many trends and many factors of the real situation compel them to pursue a policy of peace. These trends and factors seem to be stronger at present than the force of Soviet imperialism or the inherent aggressiveness of the Communist doctrine.

This chronicle has been in vain if the reader has still to be convinced that in this context the present character and personality of the Party apparatus is far more important than that of Khrushchev.

The Party apparatus of the USSR in 1959 is basically different from Stalin’s apparatus in 1939. Not only because more than half of the apparatus consists of new people, but because both old and new apparatchiki differ now from their former selves in 1939 or 1953.

The lonely terrorised, depersonalised and slogan-mongering apparatchiki of those days had all the time to fear sudden arrest and execution. Now, they no longer have to live with that fear and in fact have not had to for several years. No deep psychological analysis is necessary to see what a tremendous change this was. Persons devoid of even the possibility of human dignity and individual sovereignty have regained some

limited degree of possibility to act as independent adults.

In Stalin's day they had to represent a rigid, consistent Party policy. If the line was changed by Stalin, the new line was promptly announced together with all the officially obligatory verbal expressions. To deviate from them was deadly dangerous. Now there is no rigid and consistent Party line. Since Stalin's death no new Party programme has been announced. The old Stalinist Party history of 1938 has been withdrawn and the new Khrushchevite *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, published in the summer of 1959, is mostly vague and inconsistent. The official Party history is the textbook of the Party. The Stalinist version instructed the apparatchiki what to say on almost every event of the past and almost every possible development in current affairs. The Khrushchevite textbook, composed at a time when the struggle for power was not completely decided, is conspicuously vague on a great many important ideological and historical questions. This gives the apparatchiki a far greater freedom in formulation, and many possibilities to evade making definite pronouncements on various questions.

Fear has not of course completely disappeared from the life of the apparatchiki. But this is only fear of demotion, fear of being transferred to some remote region, *but not fear of death!* Lies have not disappeared from their life either. The new Khrushchevite Party history and Telpukhovsky's official *The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union—1941-45*, sent to the press on March 13, 1959, are mixtures of falsifications and true statements. But here too there is an obvious trend away from total falsification of history towards something—very remotely as yet—resembling "normal" history.

The intellectual thaw has of course influenced every inhabitant of the USSR. The anti-Stalin revelations of 1956, the lessons of the Polish and Hungarian revolts are not forgotten. Now that security police terror is greatly reduced, the apparatchiki *have a chance to defend their lives* by resisting every attempt at a reintroduction of the blood-purges.

But these are by no means the most important and far-reaching changes in the apparatus. Khrushchev's obvious policy was to "de-expertise" the apparatus. From the supreme leadership all *former experts* were ousted, with the exception of Mikoyan.

Molotov, during his long tenure in the Soviet Foreign Ministry, became an expert on foreign affairs. Kaganovich spent his life managing various branches of industry. Malenkov, the engineer, had his years when during the war he was responsible for aircraft production. General Serov spent most of his life in the security police. He was replaced by an apparatchik from the Comsomol, Shelepin. The planning experts Saburov and Pervukhin and even some of their semi-expert successors were replaced by apparatchiki. The army was ousted from the Presidium. All these removals and replacements at the top involved the ousting, transfer and replacement of similar expert-apparatchiki on all levels of the Party apparatus. But these ousted apparatchik-experts were not killed. They are in lower positions in the apparatus or in various governmental posts, or are managing factories. They kept their Party membership. They and their opinions exist and have a chance to be effective.

But the "de-expertisation" of the apparatus led to a result quite opposite to that which Khrushchev aimed at. The non-expert Party managers in their new positions as planning chiefs, heads of various economic, industrial or agricultural ministries or departments are being *infected with "expertism"*. They are now responsible for the direction and fulfilment of plans and for reaching production targets. In their daily contact with engineers, statisticians, economists, factory and trust managers they are influenced by the views of the technocratic élite. They see facts and figures; they get acquainted with the real situation as to raw materials, production capacity, and so on and so forth. Khrushchev can oust "anti-Party" criminals who oppose his over-optimistic, unfounded and unreasonable plans and schemes, but he cannot change the situation. This is experienced by the new non-expert apparatchiki. They become by their very position experts of a sort and therefore, more often than not, oppositionists. If they are too vocal, they too can be removed, but by doing so Khrushchev infects a further set of apparatchiki with "expertism and oppositionism".

The general trends of the second part of the century, the armaments and economic race to catch up with the USA, compel Khrushchev to raise the educational level of his apparatus. Full figures have not been published. But in the

nineteen thirties there were entire Party committees without a single university graduate and with only a sprinkling of secondary school graduates. Now almost everybody in the apparatus has been to secondary school and there is a growing proportion of university graduates. An apparatchik careerist in Stalin's days took great care to appear as a simple worker, with worker's cap and all. The 1959 careerist, if he is not a graduate already, is busily studying at an evening engineering or university course to appear as a well-educated person. In the world of apparatus status-seekers, the university diploma is most important, more so even than a big shiny car, a large secretariat, a nice country house (dacha) and the right to special holiday accommodations in the Crimean riviera.

The scientist, the intellectual, the writer and the artist have quite an exceptional place in present-day Soviet society. Their living standards have always been exceptionally high, approaching that of the Party managers. Moreover the men and women of the mind are comparatively speaking freer from Party and bureaucratic control than the rest of the population. The apparatchiki are on the same social level as the men and women of the mind. They meet and mix socially and are influenced by the intellectuals and artists. And they are aware of the worldwide trend changing the pattern of power. In our age intellectual power—which in the last analysis has always been important in human affairs—is becoming manifest and immediate. Nuclear missiles, the defence and attack machinery of nuclear war, are operated by electronic “brains”. So are the fully automated factories. One of the key figures of this age is the brilliant, “super-educated” scientist who controls and “programmes” the electronic brains. Explorers, Sputniks and Luniks are not catapulted into outer space, artificial suns are not created by any virtue of the Soviet or American or British political systems but by the scientists provided with the means to work out the problems involved. These and other experts are valuable individuals, *assets of the state*. To produce an expert from a talented person takes anything from ten to twenty years. This alone gives the experts some sort of immunity.

In the Soviet Union after Stalin's death a handful of nuclear scientists became completely immune. Their existence gave Khrushchev his first lesson that some individuals cannot be

liquidated. This made everybody, down to the last illiterate peasant, somehow more immune from arbitrary arrest.

A growing number of apparatchiki realise that the most intricate global and regional problems cannot be solved without the active, willing and creative co-operation of experts in scores of scientific fields. Without an enormous capacity to think one's way through highly complex situations and without a great deal of expert knowledge, the leaders of states are as helpless as a horse-cart driver in the cockpit of a jet plane.

The younger apparatchiki are definitely on the side of the experts. As the years pass and they come to occupy positions of command, they will exercise their influence in this direction.

The apparatus is furthermore influenced by the outside world. In Stalin's day the overwhelming majority of the apparatchiki were doubly isolated from contact with the West. They could not and did not travel, and it was most dangerous for them to read foreign publications. Under Stalin even scientists were purged if they quoted too many foreign works in their books. Since 1945 and even more so since 1953 the Soviet Union has taken an intensive part in international political, economic, scientific and cultural affairs. The proportion of apparatchiki who read foreign languages, who have been abroad several times, is incomparably larger than in the Stalin era. And for apparatchiki infected with "expertism" it is increasingly more and more difficult to *believe* the still official line about the "absolute impoverishment of American and British workers", of "dying capitalism", of "Western monopoly-capitalists keeping their working classes mercilessly in abject poverty".

Of course it is one thing to believe and quite another thing to repeat when necessary the old and still obligatory slogans. But let us consider a passage from Khrushchev's public report to the Twentieth Congress in 1956. This statement is *still the official position of the Kremlin leadership*. Speaking about the possibility of establishing Communism by non-violent, non-revolutionary means, Khrushchev said that in the non-Communist world:

. . . the working class by rallying round itself the masses of toiling peasantry, the intelligentsia, all patriotic forces . . . is in a position to defeat the reactionary forces . . . to capture a stable majority

in the Parliament and to transform the latter from an organ of bourgeois democracy into a genuine instrument of the people's will.

This is of course based on the Marxist analysis of nineteenth-century society. Then the majority of the American population, for instance, was still the "farmer class", the masses of toiling peasantry. In the second part of the twentieth century the West European and American farmers form less than fifteen per cent, in some cases hardly ten per cent of the entire population. Moreover a large part of these farmers are, according to their way of life, education and income, members of the middle class. It is ludicrous to talk in the middle of the twentieth century of "the masses of toiling peasantry", being led by the workers who "have nothing but their chains to lose".

The well-travelled and well-read apparatchiki of course *know* about these facts, about the middle-classification of Western welfare societies, and about the emergence of new population categories which cannot be placed in any of the Marxist "classes". To which class for instance belong the "servicing-enterprisers", the petrol-station owners who are in a way employees of the large petrol-companies, or the contract-farmers who could be justifiably classified as capitalists, employees or peasants?

This may not seem important in the West. In the Communist world these facts and symptoms have an explosive significance. There are many indications that the tremendous changes in the real situation all over the world are hotly debated in private in Communist Party member circles. During the various "thaws" some of these debates even came out into the open.

There is a growing tendency among Soviet apparatchiki, Party theorists, Marxist intellectuals and university students to base theory, policy and action *on the real situation of the present world* and not on dogmatic generalisations based on the situation in the last century. Khrushchev, Mao and the other leaders have to fight persistently against the "revisionists of Marxism" precisely because this is the strongest tendency. The scientists, economists, engineers do not care much for theory as such. They only fight against situations in which a reactionary clinging to the ideological façade makes it difficult for them to perform their work efficiently.

Party managers at all levels have their privileged positions at stake if Khrushchev and the Kremlin leadership commits mistakes. They might be forced into outward unity (or silence), but within the apparatus there are by now many discussions and debates. As disagreement with Khrushchev is branded as an anti-Party sin, the disagreements have to be carefully formulated; but they are there all the time.

This changed apparatus is gradually influencing Khrushchev towards a more realistic and more prudent policy—at the same time as assuring him his personal position as dictator. But it was made obvious to him that he would be promptly ousted, should he embark on blood-purges or on dangerous adventures in international politics. The apparatchiki want to avoid war, if possible, not because they are essentially peaceful men of goodwill but because powerful deterrents exist. A nuclear war would be most dangerous for Khrushchev's position and that of the apparatus. They are "the régime" and they have good reason to think that the régime in its present form would not survive a third war. The main reasons are as follows:

1. The nuclear might of the United States and the war-production potential of the NATO powers are still the greatest of the deterrents. This is mainly why the USSR has maintained 150-175 divisions since Stalin's death.

2. Nuclear warfare by its very nature is exceedingly dangerous for dictatorships. If A- or H-bombs were dropped on the principal cities of the Soviet and satellite empire, thereby cutting off or annihilating central direction of the organs of repression, MVD, KGB, police, etc., popular revolts could break out everywhere. All his experience since Stalin's death has shown to Khrushchev and the apparatus that populations, armies, students, workers, even Communists are *not to be trusted*. Wherever the system of oppression appeared to be weakened, small and large scale revolts followed. The series of revolts in China, in Siberia and in the European satellites also indicated that the armies and the ordinary police personnel cannot be trusted. The "indoctrination of youth" failed. In certain circumstances, the Chinese and Northern Vietnamese university students behaved in exactly the same way as the rebellious Polish and Hungarian, East German or Russian students. The general disorder and disorganisation following a

nuclear attack would not turn the British or American populations against their régimes. *Nuclear war would entail for the free world many dangers, but not the danger of revolts against the British or American "systems". In Soviet Russia the régime itself would be in the greatest of dangers.* A régime, which in the last analysis depends on the Party apparatus (less than half a per cent of the population) and its secret police—cannot risk breaks in the "monolithic unity" and strength of the entire machinery of oppression.

In this context the series of risings in East Germany, the Poznan riots, the Hungarian and Tibetan revolts are also among the important deterrents.

3. A clear majority of the population of the Soviet and satellite empire is, from the military standpoint, no asset but rather a source of additional danger. The nations and nationalities within the USSR, the Ukrainians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Estonians, Moldavians, and the peoples of the Asian Soviet republics and the satellites, hate bureaucratic despotism just as much as the Russians. But in addition their patriotism and national sentiment make them detest *foreign oppression* by the Russian Communist dictatorship. The Kremlin cannot rely fully on these populations. In times of war some of them would have to be policed by additional Soviet divisions. Disorganisation and chaos could give them a chance to fight against Soviet troops.

Khrushchev's régime needs many bloodless successes in the international arena and many achievements on the home front, it must permit a far higher living standard and a far easier and safer political climate for the average citizen, before the population as a whole ceases to be dangerous for the régime.

4. The 1959 USSR population census shows that the country has not yet got over the after-effects of the Stalin era and of the second world war. A third war could dangerously reduce the proportion of Russians within the USSR to that of the non-Russian majority of the inhabitants. And a third war could reduce dangerously the population of the USSR compared to the speedily growing Chinese and other Asiatic populations.

5. The Soviet army which gained tremendously in prestige and influence after the second world war, and after Stalin's death, has again been subordinated to the Party apparatus. The country was seething with indignation when the secret

anti-Stalin speech and articles in historical and military journals described the mass-murder of innocent army officers from major upwards during and after the Tukhachevsky purge. Marshal Tukhachevsky was then posthumously rehabilitated, and so by implication were many tens of thousands of officers. In 1958 and 1959 the apparatus withdrew Tukhachevsky's rehabilitation after the ousting of Marshal Zhukov. This great commander was not only "the darling of the army" but also the symbol of the army's prestige and influence. After his ousting thousands of officers were transferred to lower functions, amounting to virtual demotion. The army often showed its opposition to apparatus control, and its hatred of the security police was often demonstrated. In case of war this army would again come into its own. And it is an open question whether or not the army would again be willing to let the non-military experts in the Kremlin leadership act as war-lords, and cause unnecessary defeats and millions of casualties by their bungling. It is also an open question whether the army would again be willing after the war to be subordinated to the apparatus. The army is at present a potential source of danger for the régime in case of war.

6. The weakness of the Chinese Communist régime is also a deterrent. The series of large-scale revolts in China during the nineteen fifties, not reported by the Western press, but well known to the Kremlin leaders, showed the stand of the Chinese population. In case of war and the concomitant chaos and disorganisation, the Chinese régime might disintegrate. The USSR could then be menaced not only by revolts in its own Asiatic republics but also by attacks from the East.

7. Many of the apparatchiki have grave doubts about the possibility of catching up with the United States by 1970, even in peaceful conditions. They know that Soviet productivity per worker is far lower than in the USA because of the quadruple controls. In Stalin's time the overwhelming majority of the population paid for this with its extremely low living standard. But now that the dynamo of production is no longer terror but incentives, either the incentives have to be radically raised, or the quadruple controls have to be gradually done away with. For both alternatives peace is necessary.

The best chance of fulfilling the seven year plan and for

catching up with the West would be a great reduction in armament expenditure and armament production.

2. THE PERSONALITY AND REAL AIMS OF KHRUSHCHEV IN 1959

How have the years in power changed Khrushchev? What kind of a man is he at the end of 1959? What are his real aims? And how great is his power?

First, we have to compare Stalin's achievements with those of Khrushchev. After Lenin's death Stalin first relied on intrigue and apparatus machinations to gain a majority in the Central Committee and the Politbureau (1923-6). During the 1926-30 period he ousted all his opponents, and only then started purging them. Stalin reached this stage after seven years of power struggle. Khrushchev cannot safely feel that he has as yet fully completed the second stage, that of ousting all his opponents. Mikoyan, Suslov and Voroshilov are by no means Khrushchev-men now.

If at the time of writing this does not appear probable, there is, nevertheless, the possibility that various anti-Khrushchev factions might come into being, form a tactical coalition and attempt to oust him. In this case the personality of his ousted and not-ousted opponents could be quite important.

After decades spent in the inner sanctum of Communist dictatorship, Malenkov, Molotov, Bulganin and Kaganovich have, since 1957, been living in enforced isolation and political passivity. They have time to reflect, to evaluate and re-think the past; they have an enforced chance to develop into more clear-headed, more astute and more formidable potential Communist leaders, and into far more dangerous possible rivals.

The appendix quotes in full Malenkov's detailed official biography, along with the version which has been "edited" by Khrushchev. What that biography omits to mention is the fact that although Malenkov was also a product of the apparatus, he turned against it openly as long as twenty years ago. Having been for years (with General Poskrebyshv) Stalin's closest and most intimate assistant, he helped Stalin to manage the

apparatus. He was above the apparatus, not a part of it. And he came to be convinced that the apparatus is an inefficient tool of Soviet dictatorship. At the Eighteenth Party Congress in 1939 he shocked the apparatchiki with the statement that there are "many better Bolsheviks outside the Party" than in it. After Stalin's death he tried to concentrate power in the Soviet government. In this respect he was unorthodox and was beaten by Khrushchev's traditionalist-apparatus machinations. While he is alive, he is a dangerous potential rival of Khrushchev. His advantages are: 1. He is eight years younger than Khrushchev. 2. He came to be generally regarded as the foremost champion of anti-apparatus experts and intellectuals and of the welfare of the people. 3. According to Khrushchev nuclear war would destroy the "capitalist world". Malenkov went on record that it would destroy the world, the Soviet Union included. So he is regarded a true adherent of peace-policy.

Of all the other potential rivals, Mikoyan is the most enigmatic and dangerous. Like Kaganovich and Bulganin he was and is a Soviet business tycoon, one of the very efficient supreme managers of Soviet economy. But unlike Bulganin and Kaganovich, Mikoyan was by no means a "yes-man". Through his most dangerous career he was often a polished "no-man", selling his "yes"-es dearly. Of Armenian proletarian origins, he was one of Stalin's intimate assistants in the nineteen twenties, to develop into dictator of commerce both under Stalin* and under Khrushchev. Since Stalin's death he has often openly turned against Khrushchev, he was the first to attack Stalin's memory publicly, and in perspective turned out to be the only consistent anti-Stalinist among the present leaders. Famed for his brilliance, cunning and sense of humour, he became the mystery man of the Kremlin. How and why he got away with his highly individual political behaviour is difficult to tell.

On November 18, 1956, at a Polish Embassy reception in Moscow in the presence of Soviet officials, Western and satellite

* Mikoyan is the only one among Stalin's survivors who criticised him publicly in his lifetime. At the Eleventh Party Congress when Stalin was elected General Secretary, Mikoyan sharply criticised Stalin's nationality policy.

diplomats and journalists, Khrushchev boasted: "We Bolsheviks . . . stick firmly to the Leninist precept—Don't be stubborn if you see you are wrong, but don't give in if you are right. . . ." Here Mikoyan made an aggressive interruption: "When *are* you right?" . . . There was an awkward silence, then Khrushchev changed the subject. This was an indication of Mikoyan's no-manship in more intimate circles. And although Khrushchev always behaves as if he were convinced of the universal and instant lovability of Khrushchev, he gave some public indications of his doubts concerning Mikoyan's utter loyalty. If Khrushchev intends to complete the second Stalin stage for unlimited power, he will try to oust Mikoyan.

Khrushchev of course is a dictator in the sense that he was not democratically elected, that all governmental action is channelled through him and that there is no democratic process by which he can be removed. But Khrushchev's powers are limited by the frightful lessons Stalin taught the peoples of the Soviet Union. Apparently he has still not acquired the right to start political purges. All the facts and trends of the 1953-9 period seem to show that he would encounter exceedingly grave difficulties and very violent opposition were he to try to revive the Stalinist purges. He also encounters opposition—or rather the slow, almost imperceptible pull-back of the apparatus—when he experiments with too adventurous and over-optimistic international or internal schemes.

His actions are limited by many factors. His true aims, real convictions, and real political personality can be manifested only when and if he feels himself entirely free from rivals. Until that time there is always the possibility that he may embrace a certain theoretical line, or a practical scheme, not because he believes it to be the best, but because through it he can strengthen his position or can hurt, weaken, humiliate, defeat his actual or possible rivals within and outside the USSR. He has done this often in the past, as recorded in this chronicle. He might still have to do it. If present trends persist, he will never feel entirely free from rivals and opposition. So in this sense he will never have the *absolute* possibility of following completely his own inclinations, convictions and dreams. In this sense he is guided by the development of the Kremlin power struggle and is limited by the apparatus.

But he is not quite free in another and most important sense either. He is dogma-bound. It is difficult to tell how much he *really believes* of all the Marxist-Leninist slogans, "scientific laws" and "inevitable processes" with which his speeches and reports teem. His actions indicate that he really believes a great deal. He seems to be more dogma-bound than Molotov and Kaganovich on the one hand, and Malenkov or Mikoyan on the other. Although they all have to use a certain amount of the Lenin-Stalin terminology, and have to repeat certain ceremonial statements, many of their actions indicate that they see a great deal more of the real situation than does Khrushchev. The chief apparatchik often gives the impression of accepting "Marxism" much as a simple, not very devout Christian accepts the Bible. He flies into a rage only if some fundamental tenet is attacked by someone—or by reality. For this reason it is still almost impossible to have a rational discussion with him on free elections, on trade unions, on national independence. Having learnt when an adult that *science* (and of course all science is Marxist) *teaches* that the highest social form is Communism towards which the inevitable processes of history and all laws of economics and sociology are pushing mankind, it is difficult for him to accept any discussion of this "basic truth". To consider the possibility that Marx-Engels-Lenin could have been mistaken in envisaging the future; to examine how far present Soviet reality is a régime ruled by the workers in the interest of workers; to realise that the USA or Great Britain of the present is not exactly the same "capitalism" as seen and described by Marx or even by Lenin—all this seems to him pointless. His reaction when these subjects are broached is usually emotional. The possibility of *communicating* ideas to him which are emotionally and instinctively repugnant to him, is comparatively slight. A study of the hundreds of conversations and interviews he has had with Western politicians and journalists or of his debates and discussions abroad and during his American tour, show that *the basic questions of what he calls Communism are for him beyond and outside the realm of reason*. In this respect he is still greatly a "captive mind", far more so than most of the other leaders and the younger members of the apparatus.

This is counter-balanced in his make-up by his general non-

doctrinaire, pragmatic approach. In lesser details of Marxist theory he is not adamant. He is even largely unaware of them and his less dogma-bound advisers can achieve a great deal with him. They can influence him towards less orthodox steps because they speak to him in Marxist terminology, to which he is used. Some Western Europeans have succeeded in gaining some points in rational discussion by using Marxist language.

His experiences however are tending to make Khrushchev less dogma-bound. His great aim and dream also works in that direction—he wants to achieve in his lifetime the great victory of catching up with the USA. He will be seventy-six years old in 1970. He needs peace and a substantial decrease of international tension and of armaments if he is personally to lead the USSR to this victory. Like most leading statesmen getting on in years, he wants to secure his personal position in history. And it is obviously a much safer way to ensure this by peacefully leading his country to the position of the first power of the world, than by risking a war. In such a war he might be ousted from leadership. A war might be lost. A war might lead to internal revolution and change of régime. The best and safest way to realise his dream resides in peace and at least partial disarmament.

But peace is not enough. He has often said that the peaceful victory of 1970 can be assured only through a long series of victorious production battles. He must reshape the USSR, make it more efficient, more productive. He has to win the battle against bureaucratism and graft, against “faint-heartedness” and pessimism. He needs a population which is enthusiastic. All these needs and dreams push him towards changing many aspects of bureaucratic despotism. Consciously and intellectually he is on the side of dogma. *But with all his aspirations and activities he is bound to complex reality.* He is a man in a great hurry. He is sixty-five years old now, in 1959, and he must hurry if he wants to see results in his lifetime. There is some little possibility that as the years pass, he will become less and less dogma-bound. In striving to reach his great aim—peaceful victory—he has the backing of the apparatus and in some degree even of the population. By trying to turn—he seems to have realised this—he would have most of the apparatus and all the people against him.

And there is even a possibility that in time the leaders and the peoples of the outside world will also realise that the greatest service they can do to the world would be to represent their side as firmly, as enthusiastically as Khrushchev represents his. Doing so, they would even help the peaceful side of Khrushchev to attain some of his aims.

All this does not mean that there are no longer any aggressive factors and tendencies in the USSR, in the Soviet Party apparatus and in Khrushchev himself. The evil effects of the Stalinist past are still there. Marxism-Leninism is a most aggressive and intolerant doctrine. Any heavy economic or industrial reverse—highly possible—might change the present climate of opinion of the apparatus. Further advances in the science of war might convince Khrushchev and the Kremlin power-group—mistakenly or not—that the balance of power was in their favour, and that hence war would be the best means of attaining their global dreams. The deterrent here would be a basically united front of the free world, a clear manifestation that, beneath and besides the great divergencies of the democratic system, there is a fundamental unity as to the ultimate choice between open, human, democratic society and closed, inhuman, totalitarian society.

This chronicle has tried to demonstrate that Khrushchev is not a "liberal" in the Soviet sense. The anti-Stalin speech and the "liberal" resolution of the Twentieth Congress were more or less forced upon him. He did everything he could to minimise the effect of the anti-Stalin speech and stopped all attempts to put into practice the liberal-revisionist resolution. His present line then is the outcome of conflicting tendencies within the leadership and the apparatus.

In this context it should be considered *how* the new Party line was promulgated at the Twentieth Congress, according to which war is *not* inevitable. All Communists know by heart the two Lenin quotations to the contrary:

Under capitalism, and especially in its imperialist stage, wars are inevitable. (Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russian edition, Vol. XXI, p. 141.)

The existence of the Soviet Republic, side by side with imperialist States for a long time is unthinkable. One or the other must triumph in the end. And before that end supervenes a series of

frightful collisions between the Soviet Republic and the bourgeois States will be inevitable. (Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russian edition, Vol. XXIX, p. 133.)

At the open session of the Twentieth Congress Khrushchev said that in Lenin's days these precepts were absolutely correct:

At the present time, however, the situation has changed radically. Now there is a world camp of Socialism which is a mighty force. . . . The movement of peace supporters has sprung up and developed into a powerful factor. In these circumstances certainly, the Leninist precept that so long as imperialism exists the economic basis giving rise to wars will also be preserved *remains in force*. . . . But war is not fatalistically inevitable. Today there are *mighty social and political forces possessing formidable means to prevent the imperialists from unleashing war and, if they actually try to start it, to give a crushing rebuff to the aggressors and frustrate their adventurist plans*. To be able to do this, all anti-war forces must be vigilant and prepared, must act as a united front and never relax their efforts in the battle for peace.

In plain English: the inevitability of war ceases only if and when the situation in the non-Communist world is favourable for the defence and the victory of Communism. War is not inevitable if vigilant and united "peace-fronts" permeate the Western countries, if the free world is effectively weakened, confused and divided by Soviet policy and propaganda.

The Leninist precept of the inevitable decline and fall of all non-Communist systems, capitalism included, was *not revoked*. Another saying of Lenin's was not discussed:

. . . But as soon as we are strong enough to defeat capitalism as a whole, we shall immediately take it by the scruff of the neck. (Lenin, *Works*, 3rd Russian edition, 1935, Vol. XXV, p. 500.)

Moreover, the propaganda war was to be and is to be intensified. Khrushchev said in his public report at the Twentieth Congress:

In this connection, we cannot pass by the fact that some people are trying to apply the absolutely correct thesis of the *possibility* of peaceful co-existence of countries with different social and political systems to the ideological sphere. *This is a harmful mistake*. It does not at all follow from the fact that we stand for

peaceful co-existence and economic competition with capitalism, that *the struggle against bourgeois ideology, against the survivals of capitalism in the minds of men, can be relaxed*. Our task is tirelessly to expose bourgeois ideology, reveal how *inimical* it is to the people, show up its reactionary nature. (Emphasis added.)

For "capitalism" read: free, democratic, open society; tolerance, individualism; belief in the basic human rights; belief in absolute moral principles; the right to strike, the right to disagree; the non-acceptance of an exclusive political dogma; a non-militarised society.

Thus war for men's minds remains. This "peaceful, ideological war" can be waged on both sides with Khrushchev's blessing. This war might even influence Khrushchev himself *if waged on both sides*.

As this chronicle ends, Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev is at the cross-roads. Emerging from the blood-red chaos of the Russian revolution, surviving the nightmare decades of the Stalin era, intriguing, manoeuvring, fighting his way to the top, he struggles now with tremendous problems. Dogma-bound, he is emotionally guided by the petrification of Marx's genuine anger at the social conditions of the last century. These emotions, kept alive by a sort of collective self-hypnosis of Communist leaders, seek to justify tyranny and hatred of freedom and individualism by peopling the free world with the ghosts of bygone ages. His peasant's common sense and pragmatism pull him towards present reality, while the occupational disease of dictators has the opposite tendency. His great ambitions and dreams drive him on towards visionary goals. The chronicle can say no more.

APPENDIX I

Two versions of Malenkov's biography—before and after demotion

THE historical and biographical technique of the Khrushchev régime has been briefly described above. We give below a documentary example in detail.

A detailed biography of Malenkov was published in the second volume of a new edition of the *Soviet Encyclopedic Dictionary* which was passed for press on April 6, 1954, at a time when Khrushchev was officially first secretary of the Party and hence supreme chief of the Agit-prop department. In February 1955, after the fall of Malenkov, a new impression was printed with "corrections on certain pages". One of the changes was the halving of Malenkov's biography from 108 lines to fifty-three. The omissions were just as important as the changes in ceremonial formulations—and in facts. In the first version he had been born into the family of "an employee", in the second into that of "a *petty* employee". In the second version he no longer performed *responsible work* for the CC or held a *leading post* in the Moscow Party Committee in the thirties.

The space originally filled by Malenkov's story is taken up in the second version by entries on the *Malakhov Kurgan*—one of the outposts of Sebastopol in the Crimean war—*Malakhovsky*, a designer of railway engines, and *Malengr*, an uncommon Russian grape. (It may be mentioned in this context that Beriya's portrait was replaced by pictures of whales in the Bering Straits.)

Version of April 6, 1954.

MALENKOV, Georgy Maksimilianovich (born Jan. 8, 1902), *outstanding* personality of the Communist Party and Soviet State, a true pupil of V. I. Lenin and comrade-in-arms of I. V. Stalin. Member of the Presidium of the CC CPSU. Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR; Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. G. M. Malenkov was born in Orenburg (now Chkalov) in the family of an employee. During the civil war he volunteered for the Red Army. In April 1920 G. M. Malenkov entered the Communist Party. From 1919 until 1921 he was political worker in a squadron, regiment, brigade and the Political Administration of the Eastern and Turkestan Fronts.

After demobilisation in 1921-5 he studied in the Moscow technical college. From 1925 to 1930 G. M. Malenkov *performed responsible* work in the apparatus of the CC of the Communist Party. From 1930-4 he did *directing* work in the Moscow Committee of the Party. From 1934-9 he was Head of the Department of Leading Party Organs of the CC CPSU(b). In December 1937, during the first election to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, G. M. Malenkov was elected a Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and from that time on he has been elected regularly as a

Version of February, 1955.

MALENKOV, Georgy Maksimilianovich (born 1902) important personality of the Communist Party and Soviet State.

Member of the CPSU since 1920.

Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

Born in Orenburg (now Chkalov) in the family of a *petty* employee.

In 1919 he volunteered for the Red Army.

From 1919 until 1921 he was political worker

on the Eastern and Turkestan Fronts.

From 1921 to 1925 he studied in the Moscow technical college.

From 1925 to 1930

worked in the apparatus of the CC CPSU(b). From 1930-4—at work in the Moscow Committee of the CPSU; in 1934-9 he was Head of the Department of Leading Party Organs of the CC CPSU(b).

Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and RSFSR. At the Eighteenth Congress of the CPSU(b) in March 1939, G. M. Malenkov was elected to the Central Committee and at the Plenum of the Central Committee in March 1939 was elected Secretary of the CC CPSU(b), a member of the Orgbureau of the CC CPSU(b) and appointed Chief of the Administration for Cadres of the CC CPSU(b). At the Eighteenth All-Union Conference of the CPSU(b) in February 1941 G. M. Malenkov made a speech on the tasks of Party organisations in the sphere of industry and transport.

In February 1941 at a plenum of the CC CPSU(b) G. M. Malenkov was elected a candidate member of the Politbureau of the CC CPSU(b).

During the Great Patriotic War from June 30, 1941, to September 4, 1945, G. M. Malenkov was a member of the State Defence Committee. In August 1941, G. M. Malenkov was on the Leningrad Front; in the autumn and winter of 1941 he took an active part in the organisation of operations for the destruction of German Fascist troops near Moscow; in March 1942, he went to the Volkhov Front; in July and then in August to September to the Stalingrad and Don fronts; in March 1943, he was on the Central Front, carrying on

At the Eighteenth Congress of the CPSU(b) (1939)

was elected to the CC CPSU(b) and at the Plenum of the CC CPSU(b)

a Secretary of the CC CPSU(b), a member of the Orgbureau of the CC CPSU(b) and appointed Chief of the Administration for Cadres of the CC CPSU(b).

In February 1941, at a plenum of the CC CPSU(b) G. M. Malenkov was elected a candidate member of the Politbureau of the CC CPSU(b).

During the Great Patriotic War from 1941-5 was a member of the State Defence Committee.

everywhere great work in organising forces for the struggle against the German Fascist aggressors. As a member of the State Defence Committee G. M. Malenkov directed work for equipping the Soviet army with new fighting equipment and Soviet aviation with aircraft and engines. For *special* services in the sphere of increasing production of aircraft and motors in difficult wartime conditions G. M. Malenkov was awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labour on September 30, 1943.

In November 1945, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR awarded the Order of Lenin to G. M. Malenkov for successful work in carrying out the tasks of the Communist Party and Soviet government.

In March 1946 at a plenum of the CC of the Party G. M. Malenkov was elected a member of the Politbureau of the CC CPSU(b); he performed at this time work as Secretary of the CC of the Party and Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR. In January 1952 in connection with his 50th birthday G. M. Malenkov was awarded an Order of Lenin for outstanding services to the Communist Party and Soviet people. In October 1952, at the Nineteenth Congress of the CPSU G. M. Malenkov gave the report on the work of the CC

For services in the sphere of increasing production of aircraft and motors

G. M. Malenkov was awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labour in 1943.

In March 1946

he was elected a member of the Politbureau of the CC CPSU (b); he performed at this time work as Secretary of the CC of the Party and Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

CPSU(b). G. M. Malenkov was elected a member of the CC CPSU(b) by the Nineteenth Congress of the Party and at the plenum of the CC CPSU. Until March 1953, he was a Secretary of the CC CPSU. On March 15, 1953, the fourth session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR confirmed the appointment of G. M. Malenkov as Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

He was elected a member of the CC CPSU by the Nineteenth Congress of the Party.

From March 1953

until February 1955 he was Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR. From February 1955—Minister of Electric Power stations and Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR. Has been awarded three Orders of Lenin.

APPENDIX II

1960 Symptoms and the Summit Failure

BY the end of February 1960 there were many symptoms indicating that Khrushchev's famous "peasant common sense" is not strong enough to save him from the occupational disease of dictators. The contradictions between his over-ambitious and not well-founded schemes in industry and agriculture on the one hand, and between the realities and possibilities of the Soviet situation on the other, grew more evident during the winter of 1959-60. A long list of agricultural and industrial managers and loyal top-apparatchiki were deposed by him. In the background of each sudden demotion there was either a disagreement on concrete questions of industrial or agricultural policy, or a major difficulty or even breakdown in the virgin lands campaign, industrial reorganisation, or some other important project. Many trusted "Khrushchev-men" were simply unable to succeed with one of the dictator's unrealistic projects.

January 1960 brought the surprising news of the quick and drastic demotion of two of the most loyal Khrushchev supporters: Nikolai Belyayev and Alexey Kirichenko. Their cases are the best illustrations of the present problems of top-apparatchiki: they either resist Khrushchev's unrealistic projects and become "expert-oppositionists" or fail to put them into practice and get fired.

Belyayev was K.'s chief assistant in the 1954-55 virgin lands campaign. In 1955 he became a Cent-Com secretary and in 1957, as Presidium member, was the main agricultural manager. He also became first secretary of Kazakhstan, the "virgin lands republic". In January 1960 he was demoted to the secretaryship of the Stavropol region, for "failing in Kazakhstan". Khrushchev said: "Friendship is friendship, but work is work". But was it Belyayev who had failed and not K.'s virgin lands campaign?

In November 1956, K. publicly rebuked Mikoyan for doubting that Kazakhstan would produce a milliard pood of grain

a year. He said: "750 million perhaps . . . but a milliard?" K. was the victor, because in the first year Kazakhstan did produce a milliard. But in 1959 grain production was 700 million poods instead of the planned 794 millions. This failure also revealed a general crisis in the virgin lands project, in the supply of agricultural machinery, fertilisers, etc. There were riots and mass-escapes from the virgin land area.

Deposing Belyayev, Khrushchev said that in Kazakhstan 18,000 tractors, 32,000 combines, 21,000 harvester machines and 11,000 reapers were out of order. He added that had Belyayev informed him about the lack of mechanics and spare parts, 30,000 to 50,000 of the best combine operators could have been flown in from the Ukraine and the North Caucasus, and spare parts could have been provided from all over the Soviet Union to repair the machines. Khrushchev complained that Belyayev did not inform him about these difficulties. We can document from the Moscow and Kazakh press the exact opposite. *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda* often complained in 1959 about the lack of trained mechanics, of spare parts, of storage facilities and of driers. As the late Kazakhstan harvest approached, there were frequent references in the press to the urgent need for spare parts for the tractor fleet. The last appeal was in *Komsomolskaya Pravda* (July 29, 1959), stating that 32,000 combines were out of order. *Izvestia* reported in April and June 1959 that about half the men drafted to certain State farms in 1958 had left for home a year later, because of intolerable living conditions and because of shortage of women in the area. *Komsomolskaya Pravda* reported at the end of July that 30,000 girls had already arrived in the republic to remedy the situation. Many of these however soon escaped because of primitive living conditions. The same paper reported on May 10 and 15 that at the Karaganda Metal Works, under construction at Temir-Tau, a group of Ukrainian youths had refused to work under existing conditions. Twenty thousand youths in Temir-Tau had nowhere to dry their clothes. There was only one bath-house in every settlement, with endless queues outside. Sanitary arrangements were inadequate, they had no winter clothing and the food was very poor.

In August and September 1959 this situation, and the preferential treatment given to Bulgarian workers brought to the

region, led to looting of stores and to other disturbances which were squashed by the militia and the army. To remedy the situation, General K. F. Lutin, deputy Chairman of the USSR KGB (Committee of State Security) was appointed Chairman of the Kazakh KGP (*Kazakhstanskaya Pravda*, October 11). Lutin, who played a major role in the trial of Beriia, fired the Kazakh MVD Minister, the Karaganda oblast first secretary and a number of other leading officials. The Moscow Central Committee sent I. G. Koval to the Karaganda oblast as a "special inspector". On the plenum of the Karaganda Oblast Party Committee "examples were given of an intolerable indifference to the pressing needs of workers". The Kazakh Ministers of Trade, Communications and Culture were rebuked for not improving the living conditions of agricultural and industrial workers (*Kazakhstanskaya Pravda*, October 28, 1959).

On January 22, 1960, Kunayev, the new first secretary replacing Belyayev, reported to a party meeting the first measures to overcome the crisis. On Khrushchev's suggestion a new Ministry would be set up in one of the virgin lands towns to supervise the grain-producing state farms. Also a special Party bureau for virgin land affairs would be established, he said, and called for the *training of 60,000 tractor drivers and 150,000 mechanics to prevent breakdowns in the repair services*. He revealed that of the 140,900 people who had deserted the virgin lands in the last two years, there were many thousands of trained mechanics.

This shows that Belyayev, despite his frantic appeals in the Kazakh press (controlled by him!), could not obtain the necessary man-power, machines, spare parts, catering and sanitary services for Kazakhstan. Mikoyan, the agricultural experts and the "anti-Party conspirators" had been afraid all along that the virgin lands scheme would fail because of these shortages. To send combine harvesters urgently from the Ukraine to Kazakhstan, as Khrushchev suggested, would merely have shifted the difficulties from one Republic to the other. It has in fact turned out that the first easy returns from the virgin soil have been exhausted. After five years under grain the land needs fertilisers. Yet supplies of both natural and artificial fertilisers are inadequate. So the virgin land campaign

has to be extended still further, with all the attendant difficulties of long hauls and undeveloped communications, to say nothing of lack of housing, supplies and services to the new settlers. All these difficulties were foretold by Malenkov and other critics of the virgin lands scheme.

There were other symptoms indicating that Khrushchev is faced with grave difficulties in keeping his promise of overtaking the United States in agricultural and industrial production, let alone living standards. Only terror can force masses of people to put up with intolerable living conditions on the virgin lands. And Khrushchev cannot, it seems, resort to terror.

The factors attending Kirichenko's demotion brought to light other symptoms. Until his demotion to the secretaryship of the Rostov region, Kirichenko was regarded as one of Khrushchev's likeliest successors. In 1955 he became a full member of the Presidium and in 1957 one of the secretaries of the Central Committee. On his 50th birthday in February 1958 he received the Order of Lenin and very flattering congratulations from the Central Committee and the Government. At the Twenty-first Party Congress he reported on recruitment and leadership. Until recently he was one of the main directors of appointments and questions of personnel. As Khrushchev's right-hand man, he was supposed to rejuvenate the Party and State apparatus by promoting able, young men who can overcome all difficulties and cure bureaucratic elephantiasis (inherent in the system of multiple controls.)

Soviet economy and planning suffers greatly from semi-official graft which tries to cut through the labyrinths of bureaucracy by the employment of well-paid "fixers" and "contact-men" (*tolkach*). These contact men avoid the bureaucratic maze by securing supplies and transport through bribery and direct barter deals between State Farms, factories, building trusts, etc. The fixers produce quick results for their employers, but the result is that a *considerable part of Soviet economic life goes on without the knowledge and control of the Central and local planning and other authorities.* (Kazakhstan, evidently, had supply problems too huge to be solved through the service of fixers.)

As one of the chief executors and sponsors of Khrushchev's schemes, Kirichenko was criticised by opponents of these for the

partial failure of these schemes and projects. The constant reorganisations increased the bureaucratic labyrinth and the importance of the fixers. Khrushchev satisfied his opponents by putting some of the blame on Kirichenko.

Kirichenko and his appointees could not produce quick enough and big enough results, so they had to go. After announcing his grand plans for overtaking the USA, Khrushchev cannot afford to doubt the wisdom of his plans and promises. He is constantly trying to get a new set of even more brilliant leaders who can produce results for him, in spite of the existing possibilities. Hence the continuous process of demotions and promotions.*

A further symptom of the occupational disease of dictators is Khrushchev's recent move to project himself as chief architect of the Stalingrad victory. General Vassily Chuikov, who was commander of the 62nd Army at Stalingrad, published early in 1960 the first volume of his war-memoirs *From the Volga to the Spree*. This maintains that Khrushchev was the main organiser of the Stalingrad victory, head of the Stalingrad military council and originator of the famous "not a step back" order. In the new Khrushchevite Communist Party History published in March 1959 there were no such claims, and Stalin's often mentioned "not a step back" order was attributed to the central command. All the Soviet newspapers of the time, all citations, official communiqués and all memoirs make it perfectly clear that Malenkov, as representative of the State Defence Committee (of which Khrushchev was not a member), was the political head of the supreme command consisting of the generals Zhukov, Vassilevsky and Voronov, none of whom are mentioned in the new book. Chuikov's book shows that Khrushchev is just as intent to promote his own past as Stalin was. Doing so, he is not very prudent because to erase all the documents of the Stalingrad battles is a nearly impossible undertaking.

* Kunayev, for instance, is the fifty-first secretary in Kazakhstan since the 1954 introduction of the virgin lands scheme.

2

The first five months of 1960 shattered many Western illusions about Khrushchev. Those who saw in Khrushchev's summit policy a prelude to the establishment of international confidence, co-operation and true peace were sadly disappointed. This policy was exposed as a tactical interlude in a continuing political and economic struggle, without any cessation in the war of nerves. It turned out that by his summit propaganda Khrushchev tried to induce the Western powers to abandon political, military and psychological measures adopted to meet the possibility of aggression and the Soviet claim to world power. There was a growing awareness that the sole aim of the co-existence policy was to change the balance of power in favour of the Communist bloc until Communism becomes a "world system".

Ever since November 6, 1957, when Khrushchev proposed a summit conference (right after launching Sputnik I and II), there has been a high-pressure nerve warfare to persuade world opinion that we are on the brink of catastrophe; that the balance of power has swung in favour of the Communist bloc, and that Western compliance and willingness to meet the Soviet bloc halfway can alone avert nuclear annihilation. By alternating between threats and peaceful gestures, the Kremlin kept up the nerve warfare. The most important diplomatic steps were preceded by firing of inter-continental ballistic missiles or space-satellites.

On January 14, 1960, Khrushchev announced to the Supreme Soviet that within two years the Soviet Armed Forces were to be reduced by 1,200,000 men. The meeting issued an appeal to all governments and parliaments. Both documents noted the importance of the Khrushchev-Eisenhower meeting and the part it had played in relaxing tensions, and appealed to all nations to follow the Soviet example and reduce their armies. Khrushchev claimed on this occasion that the Soviet Union is the first power to reduce its armed forces to the level proposed in 1956 and appealed to the Western Powers to follow the Soviet example. *In fact both*

the U.S. and the British armed forces were at the level proposed for them in 1956. The Soviet Premier made it quite clear that the reduction of Soviet conventional forces does not entail a corresponding reduction in the military might of the USSR. He said:

The Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government can report to you, Comrade Deputies, that the weapons we already possess are formidable; and those which are, as it were, about to appear are even more perfect and more formidable. The weapons being created . . . are incredible weapons . . . The Soviet Army at present possesses such weapons and such firepower as has never been possessed by any army before . . . Should any madman provoke an attack on our State, or other Socialist States, we should be able literally to wipe off the face of the earth the country or countries which had attacked us.

(Khrushchev's speech, *Pravda*, January 15, 1960)

Khrushchev again maintained that the Soviet Union would survive a nuclear war while the capitalist West would "suffer incomparably more". At the same time he violently attacked the "bankrupt (Western) policy of negotiating from strength".

At the beginning of February the Warsaw Treaty Powers met in Moscow and their declaration followed the Khrushchev-line of the day: peace campaign mingled with threats:

If the efforts towards the conclusion of a peace treaty with both German States do not meet with support and if the solution of this question comes up against attempts at procrastination, the States represented at this conference will have no alternative but . . . to conclude a Peace Treaty with the German Democratic Republic and to solve on this basis also the question of West Berlin. (*Pravda*, February 5.)

The vilification campaign against West Germany was stepped up. In an angry letter to Chancellor Adenauer Khrushchev renewed his threats to sign a separate peace treaty with East Germany. Next month, speaking in France, he accused Adenauer of "Hitlerlike" tendencies and warned the French people against too close ties with West Germany. Meanwhile the East German puppet regime intensified its

drive for the collectivisation and complete "Socialist transformation" of the country, to illustrate Khrushchev's thesis that the irrevocably changed East Germany cannot be united with the totally different German Federal Republic.

Throughout April Soviet propaganda gave even clearer clues to Soviet intentions. The press and radio of the Communist orbit represented the Western Powers as obstructing negotiations on disarmament and argued that West Germany is the main obstacle to a peaceful solution. Although the Communist Chinese press was by far the most violent in this campaign, the Soviet press made it increasingly clear that the Kremlin was in no mood for real negotiations on the coming summit conference.

After his Paris talks with President de Gaulle in March, Khrushchev realized that the Western Powers are not prepared to give in to him on *all* of the summit issues.

The Western plan on control of missiles and nuclear disarmament took due account of Soviet suspicions about inspection. Under the new, pre-summit plan, Khrushchev would not be able to argue that the West wishes to begin "spying before disarmament". Control would at each stage correspond to the degree of disarmament. On this and other matters the Western Powers were ready for genuine negotiations and met the Soviets halfway. On Germany and Berlin, however, they made their stand quite clear. Nothing changed in this respect since Mr. Herter, the American Secretary of State, summed up the situation at the closing session of the Geneva conference of Foreign Ministers in August 1959:

The Soviet Union is, as far as I can determine, not really interested in 'improving' the situation in Berlin. It is interested in getting the Western Powers out of Berlin. Apparently continued competitive co-existence of freedom and Communism in Berlin is unrewarding to the Soviet Union.

The key to our differences about Berlin is thus not so much in the specific issues we have discussed as in the basic question of whether or not the West Berliners are to remain free.

The Soviet proposals to date have seemed to us to be designed gradually to annex these people to the Communist system against their will. This cannot be permitted.

In April 1960, Mr. Herter and his deputy, Mr. Douglas Dillon, repeated the gist of this statement. Khrushchev was fully aware that the coming Paris summit meeting would not be an all-round victory for him. *And he needed such a victory badly.* In 1959 he had the Kazakhstan harvest failure. In the spring of 1960 the enormous dust storms, coming from his eroded virgin lands and sweeping all over the Soviet Union, provided a further indication that all is not well with the grandiose virgin lands scheme. There were also further symptoms of economic difficulties caused by the Khrushchev-reforms in industry. The army leaders were highly critical of the intended reduction of the armed forces and of the great preference given to long-range missiles over conventional arms—before Khrushchev's "soft" policy brought visible results. Khrushchev needed a great victory on the international field to strengthen his position and to silence his opponents.

There were many signs that the power struggle was flaring up again in the Kremlin and that the Soviet, Chinese, East German and Czechoslovak "tough-liners" were increasingly active. Khrushchev had to drop some of his adherents, and incidentally received a pretext to turn against Mikoyan.

One of the signs that Khrushchev had abandoned all intentions to *negotiate* in the Western sense of the word, at the summit meeting, was the refusal to acknowledge Western concessions on the control and inspection of disarmament. Khrushchev insisted in several speeches that with the control system the West intended to spy on Russia.

Three weeks before the summit meeting Khrushchev repeated in the strongest possible terms the Soviet threat that if a German peace treaty was not signed the USSR would conclude a separate peace treaty with Eastern Germany, and that the rights of the Western Powers in West Berlin would cease, including the right of access to the city. Speaking at

Baku on April 25, he told the West that if they tried to keep troops in Berlin, "force will be opposed by force". He heaped violent insults on "American warmongers" and made it abundantly clear that the Soviet Union's pre-summit attitude is most uncompromising on all of the summit issues. "Some people," he said, "apparently hope to reduce this meeting to an ineffectual exchange of opinion . . . and to evade concrete decisions . . . Such methods are least of all suited for dealing with the Soviet Union."

The five months of the pre-summit war of nerves was waged with the old Pavlovian method to disorganize the opponent's psychological defenses. By mixing promises of peace with threats of nuclear catastrophe, by alternating in irregular intervals between a high state of tension and reassuring relaxation, the opponents were to be confused and driven to a weakened state of near hysteria. The only constancy was in the picture given of Soviet might. The Soviet Union was supposed to possess the most perfect and mightiest offensive and *defensive* power.

Then came the capture on May 1 of a U.S. intelligence plane. During the next fortnight it turned out *that ever since 1956 American intelligence planes had flown all over Soviet territory, and that Russian rockets and interceptors had failed to stop them*. The capture of the American intelligence plane might have been a further propaganda victory for the USSR, had not Khrushchev himself revealed that these flights had been going on since 1956. Soon after this incident at a Czechoslovak Embassy reception in Moscow Khrushchev complained in a loud voice:

When Twining, the then chief of staff of the U.S. Air Force, arrived here (in 1956) we welcomed him as a guest and entertained him. He left our country by air and next day sent a plane flying at great altitude to our country. This plane flew as far as Kiev. Only an animal might act as Twining, eating at a place, then doing its unpleasant business there.

On his Paris press conference Khrushchev was asked: if the American high altitude flights had gone on for four years over the USSR and he had known about them, why had he not protested on his American visit? The answer was that during the Camp David talks with President Eisenhower . . . "I became apprehensive and I thought there was something fishy about this friend of mine, and I did not broach the subject." He also said in Paris:

What would you think of your government if it treated with indifference, with unconcern, the overflights of your cities by military planes . . . *Would you respect such a government?* Would your families and yourselves *feel safe* listening to the drone of alien planes over your heads? (Emphasis added.)

In East Berlin he made the point even clearer:

There was a wry smile on the faces of President Eisenhower, Herter, Nixon and, above all, Allen Dulles, when they anticipated the meeting in Paris where Eisenhower would glance at Khrushchev and think: 'What is the use of trying to convince us here? U.S. planes flew over the territory of the Soviet Union, and *you could not do anything* and nevertheless came to Paris.' (Emphasis added.)

The U-2 incident revealed to the entire Sino-Soviet bloc that there was and still is in May 1960 *a great gap in Soviet defences*. Each of the U-2 flights confronted Soviet ground defences with the fear of surprise nuclear attack, yet Soviet rockets and fighters could not and cannot reach these planes. The unexpected destruction of a U-2 instead of a propaganda victory swiftly turned into a tremendous loss of face of the Kremlin leadership. In the Soviet world of extreme secretiveness many political and military leaders did not know about these overflights. But now this weakness had been revealed in a most dramatic way. As the U-2 planes could not be grounded by Soviet rockets and fighters, Khrushchev had to stop these flights by great publicity-fireworks and by drastic threats against the bases from which the planes took off.

After he effectively wrecked the summit with his abusive initial statement and his demand for an abject American apology, Khrushchev was asked in Paris why he made his anti-American tirade public. His answer: *"I could not do otherwise, it was a matter which involved internal politics."*

This astonishingly frank statement only strengthened the impression gained from a closer look at Khrushchev's vacillations since the May 1 plane incident:

May 3. Soviet Air Chief Marshal Vershinin confirms intention to visit the United States. The Soviets offer some concessions in Geneva.

May 5. Khrushchev reports the shooting down of the American plane without giving details, hoping to trap the American leadership.

May 6. U.S. declaration about meteorological overflight.

May 7. Khrushchev exposes the "spy-plane" incident. His language is still not violent, he even minimizes its significance by his joke about the pilot who intended to seduce Marsian maidens with his gold rings. He also states that he is prepared to believe that President Eisenhower did not know about these flights.

The State Department acknowledges that U.S. planes have been spying over Russia, but denies that the May 1 flight was authorized by Washington.

Protest meetings all over the Soviet Union.

May 9. American Secretary of State, Herter, indicates that the intelligence flights will continue and suggests that President Eisenhower authorised them.

Khrushchev's language becomes most violent. He warns that the Soviets will retaliate with rockets at the foreign U.S. bases.

May 10. Moscow announces that the American pilot will be tried.

May 11. President Eisenhower states that intelligence activities are vital for the survival of the free world.

Khrushchev speaks to the press on the Moscow exhibition of the spy-plane wreckage. Warns that spying might lead to nuclear war. States that President Eisenhower is not welcome in Moscow. And gives a hint that he might contract out of the summit: *"I am going to Paris on Saturday, but if some people want to prevent a conference, we can do without it."* The Soviet

Union has existed for 40 years without a summit, and it can exist for 100 more."

May 12. Khrushchev tells reporters in Moscow's Gorky Park that *he does not intend to bring up the plane incident at the summit meeting.* Further protest meetings in the Soviet Union. Vilification campaign against "U.S. warmongers" in the Soviet Radio.

May 13. Session of the Presidium of the Communist Party. Mikoyan is not present. Khrushchev announces that he will be accompanied by Marshal Malinovsky. Marshal Vershinin cancels his U.S. visit.

May 14. Khrushchev arrives in Paris. In his aerodrome speech gives no indication that he came to wreck the summit.

May 15. Soviet space ship is launched. Khrushchev informs President de Gaulle that he demands an abject apology from America.

May 16. Khrushchev delivers his ultimatum:

"The U.S. Government must firmly condemn the inadmissible provocative actions of the U.S. Air Force with regard to the Soviet Union, and secondly, refrain from continuing such actions and such policy against the USSR in the future. It goes without saying that in this case the U.S. Government cannot fail to call to strict account those who are directly guilty of the deliberate violation by American aircraft of the borders of the USSR. Until this is done, the Soviet Government sees no possibility for productive negotiations with the U.S. Government at the summit conference."

Khrushchev denounced the U-2 flight as "aggressive . . . treacherous . . . incompatible with the elementary requirements of the maintenance of normal relations between states in times of peace."

President Eisenhower naturally rejected the Soviet ultimatum. Khrushchev, he said, "alleges that the U.S. has, through official statements, threatened continued overflights . . . The U.S. has made no such threat. Neither I nor my Government has intended any . . . In point of fact, these flights were suspended after the recent incident and *are not to be resumed.* Accordingly, this cannot be an issue."

Subsequently, the efforts of the British Prime Minister, Mr. Macmillan, and those of President de Gaulle to save the

summit meeting, only underlined the fact that Khrushchev does not want to or cannot continue the negotiations. He softened the initial shock by announcing his willingness to take part in a new summit conference in six or eight months' time. The Pavlovian tactics were employed again. In Paris he threatened to sign a separate peace treaty with East Germany, yet two days later he disappointed his East German puppets by stating that he might wait with this action till after the next summit conference.

* * *

The announcement that President Eisenhower and the State Department authorised the intelligence flights, which have been going on for years, was obviously *an unexpected shock of humiliation for the Kremlin*. Khrushchev knew that his opponents in the Kremlin and all over the Communist bloc were strengthened by these revelations, and that they can count on the very widespread popular indignation over the U-2 incident. He had to change his plans for the coming summit meeting. Before this incident he planned to shock the world with his uncompromising stand over the Berlin issue. His speeches and actions during the pre-summit period make it more than probable that he decided some time *before* the U-2 incident to torpedo the summit meeting. He intended to show the Soviet critics of his "soft" policy that, by his tough and adamant behaviour on the very centre of the international stage, he can initiate a new period of tension. At the same time he had to avoid a final clash on the Berlin issue.

The shock and humiliation of the plane incident — and the attacks of his opponents — forced him to change plans and give the world a far more spectacular shock. But on the basis of facts known in May 1960 it seems certain that *the plane incident explains only the brutal form in which the summit meeting was wrecked*. It would have been wrecked in some other less drastic form in any case.

Khrushchev's uncouth outbursts betrayed his impotent rage caused by the humiliation of having to admit unchallenged American overflights, and also perhaps his anger felt over the

behaviour of his Soviet opponents. Nevertheless he went on with the essentials of his "soft" policy. He reassured the outside world and the Soviet people that he does not intend to precipitate an imminent crisis over the Berlin issue. This seemed to show that his internal popularity, if any, depends on his promises of a peaceful and more prosperous life. And his vacillations show that he wants to avoid the risk of a nuclear war.

The summit failure was to end the period of illusions. Will the protagonists take a realistic look at each other and base their policies on the facts of the situation? Only the future will show.

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